

## UAE deposits \$150 million in Central Bank

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Arab Emirates has made a \$150 million long-term deposit in the Central Bank of Jordan to bolster the Kingdom's foreign currency reserves, Prime Minister Fayed Tarawneh said Tuesday. "I have been informed by the CBJ governor that the UAE Central Bank on Tuesday, March 2, deposited a sum of \$150 million as a long-term deposit in the CBJ to further boost the foreign currency reserves of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," Tarawneh said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency. Petra. Tarawneh expressed Jordan's appreciation of UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan and the government and people of the UAE for this move, which "reflects the deep and strong brotherly ties between His Majesty King Abdullah and Sheikh Zayed as well as relations between the two countries."

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation



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Detainees  
in PNA  
jails end  
36-day  
hunger  
strike

### Israeli embassy guard dies

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Israeli security guard shot last week by another security guard at Israel's embassy in Jordan died Tuesday of his wounds, a hospital official said. Gefen Josef Shurel, 24, was in critical condition when he arrived at Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital and never recovered, spokeswoman Yael Bossm-Levy said. "He had a chest wound and had lost a great deal of blood and this caused brain damage," she told The Associated Press. The guard who fired the shot has been recalled to Israel and the shooting is being investigated by the police, Sharon said.

### Hijacker surrenders at Paris airport

PARIS (R) — An Italian-speaking man who hijacked an Air France A-320 Airbus with 75 passengers aboard on a domestic flight on Tuesday surrendered to police in the early evening, authorities said. They said no one was hurt. No further details were immediately available about the surrender. The LCI All News television channel said the hijacker telephoned a French news agency and said his name was Stefano Savorini and he was a member of a group called "Vitale Missimo." The man, who threatened to detonate a bomb on the plane, first released all but six volunteers from among the passengers and the six crew members.

### Germany to appeal U.S. execution

BONN (AFP) — Germany is to appeal to the International Court of Justice in The Hague over the planned execution in the U.S. of German national Walter Lagrand, 37, scheduled for Wednesday, a government source said Tuesday. Justice Minister Hans Daebler-Gmelin suggested to Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in an open letter Tuesday that he should bring the U.S. stance on the execution before the international court. Lagrand's brother Karl, 35, was executed in Florence, Arizona, last Wednesday. The brothers were condemned to death in 1984 after being convicted of stabbing to death a 63-year-old bank manager in a botched robbery in 1982.

### Religious group occupies building

MOSCOW (R) — A group of Evangelical Christians was holed up in an administrative building in a remote Siberian town on Tuesday, singing and praying but offering little clue as to their precise demands, officials said. Sergei Litvinenkov, head of the local administration in the vast Yakutia province of eastern Russia, told Moscow's Echo Moskvy Radio that members of a religious group had occupied the building, demanding compensation for lumber they had provided to local residents. But they refused to say precisely what they wanted in return. They rejected offers of money, broke off negotiations and began singing and praying. Litvinenkov said.

### White House press corps stuck in Utah

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — The White House press corps, abandoned in Utah when President Bill Clinton cut short his vacation, was stranded again on Tuesday when their bus crashed into the plane that was to ferry them home. The bus carrying some of the 30 reporters, television crews and White House staff left behind when Clinton flew home a day early on Monday, ripped into the wing of the Miami airplane sitting on the tarmac at Salt Lake City International Airport.

### Khatib to reopen embassy today

## Jordanian, Kuwaiti FMs welcome return to normal bilateral ties

By Caroline Faraj

KUWAIT CITY — Relations between Jordan and Kuwait are "back to normal," Kuwait's foreign minister stated Tuesday after holding talks with Foreign Minister Abdul Iah Khatib.

"We are looking for a better future, hoping that relations will become as warm as they were before," Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah told journalists accompanying Khatib, who arrived in Kuwait to reopen the Jordanian embassy here after eight years of strained relations over the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister, who is also deputy prime minister, also announced that he accepted Khatib's invitation to visit Jordan and said he will visit Jordan "in the

very near future, where I will be honoured to meet His Majesty King Abdullah and senior officials."

After talks with Kuwaiti leaders here, Khatib told the Jordan Times that his "visit is a political declaration that ties between Jordan and Kuwait have now been restored to their normal status."

Khatib, who arrived in Kuwait yesterday, also met with Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah and delivered a message from King Abdullah.

Last month, the emir granted pardons to 306 prisoners, including the last eight Jordanians held for collaboration with Iraqi forces during the Gulf crisis.

Their release, seen as a further sign of goodwill, followed that of 13 other Jordanians in April

1998.

Khatib also met with Kuwaiti Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Sa'd Al Abdullah Al Sabah, who was in Amman three weeks ago to attend the funeral of King Hussein.

Stressing that the leadership of both countries seek to improve relations, Khatib said: "There is a genuine political will in the two countries to push forward the brotherly relations for the benefit of the peoples. Therefore, the door will be opened and nothing will block our way."

Following the meeting with his Kuwaiti counterpart, Khatib told reporters that their in-depth discussions centred on accelerating bilateral relations and reviewing recent regional developments.



His Majesty King Abdullah holds talks with the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff of the French army, Jean-Pierre Kelche (Petra photo)

## King meets with French general, Japanese official

AMMAN (J.T.) — His

Majesty King Abdullah on Tuesday met with the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff of the French army, Jean-Pierre Kelche, who condoled the passing away of King Hussein.

During the meeting, King Abdullah and the French general reviewed bilateral relations, especially in the field of joint military training.

King Abdullah praised the two countries' ties and stressed the importance of strengthening them.

The King sent his greetings to French President Jacques Chirac and expressed appreciation.

Ammari and the Japanese Ambassador Koichi Matsumoto to Jordan attended the talks.

King Abdullah also inspected the State Security Council, where he was briefed by HRH Prince Talal Ben Mohammad on tasks conducted by the council.

Meanwhile, U.S. Undersecretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Stuart Eizenstat arrived yesterday for a two-day visit to the Kingdom. Eizenstat will meet with King Abdullah, Prime Minister Fayed Tarawneh and senior Jordanian officials, a press release from the U.S. embassy in Amman said.

## Israel frees Lebanese, Palestinian prisoners

TYRE (R) — Israel on Tuesday freed a Lebanese and a Palestinian imprisoned inside the Jewish state since the early 1990s, security sources said.

They said the detainees, Palestinian Mahmoud Al Ali and Lebanese Qassem Faris, were escorted out of Israel by the International Committee of the Red Cross which then took them to the southern Lebanese city of Tyre.

Al Ali was arrested in 1990

while Faris was detained three years later. They were charged with belonging to guerrilla groups fighting to oust Israeli troops from southern Lebanon.

Israel, which had controlled parts of the south since 1978, carved out a 15-kilometre deep zone in the area in 1985, saying it needed to protect its borders from potential guerrilla attacks.

Scores of Lebanese are imprisoned inside the occu-

pation zone. Many more serve jail terms in Israeli prisons, which has sparked criticism from human rights watchdog Amnesty International.

In January, Israel's supreme court weighed whether the Jewish state could hold four nationalists without trial as "bargaining chips" in negotiations over Israeli soldiers that went missing during military operations in Lebanon. The court had been dis-

cussing an appeal of a 2-1 ruling a year earlier that said it was possible to hold foreigners prisoner as "bargaining chips."

A spokesman for Israel's court administration, Moshe Goralli, said on Tuesday the Jan. 27 deliberation adjourned without a decision. He said there would be another meeting of the nine-court panel and then a decision, but no date had been set.

for his participation in

King Hussein's funeral.

Also Tuesday, King Abd-

ullah met with Japanese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Nobutaka Machimura for talks on bilateral issues.

Discussions included the

peace process and Japan's role

in strengthening the region's stability, promoting development and improving the economic situation.

During the meeting, King

Abdullah praised the

two countries' ties and stressed the importance of strengthening them.

The King send his greetings to French President Jacques Chirac and expressed appreciation.

Planning Minister Nabil

make the sector the capital of a future independent state.

Since Israel annexed east Jerusalem in 1967, it has settled more than 160,000 Jews in the area. A census by the Palestinian National Authority a year ago put the Palestinian population of the city at around 200,000, while Israel says about 160,000 Arabs live there.

The international communi-

ty has never recognised

the Israeli claim to east

Jerusalem and the future

status of the city is to be

negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians under the Oslo peace accords.

## Israeli candidates square off over Lebanon withdrawal

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's war of attrition in south Lebanon took centre stage in election campaigning on Tuesday as the country prepared to bury its highest-ranking officer killed in Lebanon since 1982.

Opposition Labour Party leader Ehud Barak attacked Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for failing to get Israel's troops out of south Lebanon and pledged he would bring them home by June 2000 if he wins a general election on May 17.

"Netanyahu is leading a government that has been bogged down in every field. You need balls to move this issue to start going forward and stop this incessant jabbering," Barak said.

Netanyahu said ex-army chief Barak had helped trap Israel's forces in Lebanon and promised that he, too, could have the troops out within a year. But he said setting a specific date would play into the hands of pro-Iranian Hezbollah guerrillas.

The debate was sparked by the killings of seven Israelis, including Brigadier General Erez Gerstein, by Hezbollah forces fighting to oust Israel from its south Lebanon occupation zone in two separate incidents in the space of a week.

Israel responded with air strikes on Hezbollah targets deep in Lebanon but threats of a wider Israeli offensive fizzled out after Hezbollah held off from firing into northern Israel.

Gerstein, the most senior officer to be killed in Lebanon since the early days of Israel's invasion in 1982, was due to be buried with full military honours later on Tuesday.

"Within a year of forming a government that I will lead, I will bring the boys home from Lebanon in the framework of

an arrangement that will guarantee the security of the northern towns," Barak told Israel radio.

He said he would reach a deal by restarting moribund peace talks with Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon, and by marshalling world backing for the possible deployment of an international force along the Israel-Lebanon border.

Barak said a Lebanon pullback could be implemented even before Israel had completed peace talks with Damascus on the fate of the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau Israel occupied in 1967.

Netanyahu, whose Lebanon initiatives have founders in nearly three years in power, said a year would be enough for him to leave Lebanon either through a deal with Syria or by unilaterally pulling out — an idea he has so far resisted.

"I estimate that we will find a way, by one of these two possibilities, to get the army out in the coming year. I will of course not commit to an iron date," Netanyahu told army radio.

He said he would not pay an "exaggerated price" for a deal with Syria, charging Labour would give away too much on the Golan.

Netanyahu said his government had been discussing ideas for a unilateral pullback for months but said any such step would have to be carried out without "exposing the northern border to too great a danger of renewed Hezbollah attacks." He did not elaborate.

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, a hawk who as defence minister engineered Israel's 1982 Lebanon invasion, has advocated a phased unilateral pullback from south Lebanon.

## Nearly 800 Palestinians stripped of Jerusalem residency last year

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel stripped nearly 800 Palestinians of their right to live in Jerusalem last year in what critics call a "silent transfer" of Arabs from the occupied city, officials said Tuesday.

An interior ministry spokeswoman said the Jerusalem residency permits of 788 Palestinians had been cancelled last year on the grounds that they had "made the centre of their lives outside the country."

Of the total, 618 of the residents had been living abroad and 170 in the West Bank or Gaza Strip, the court had been dis-

spokeswoman, Tova Ellinson, told AFP.

Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups have long condemned the practice of revoking Palestinians' permits to live in east Jerusalem, which Israel occupied in 1967 and illegally annexed as part of its own capital.

Many of those who lose their residency rights are native-born Jerusalemites whose families had lived in the city for generations. In most cases, they were forced by housing shortages to move to neighbouring towns in the West Bank or travelled abroad for work or

study.

The loss of Jerusalem residency deprives families both of the right to enter Israel and access to schooling or social and medical benefits in the country. In tandem with the residency cancellations, Israeli authorities also pursue an aggressive policy of demolishing new homes or housing additions built in east Jerusalem without authorisation.

The interior ministry issued 201 such demolition orders in 1998, although only nine were actually carried out, the Haaretz newspaper reported Tuesday, cit-

ing internal ministry documents. The Israeli-controlled municipality also issued 38 demolition orders last year for east Jerusalem homes.

Palestinians complain that Israeli authorities issue only a trickle of construction permits for Arabs in east Jerusalem, forcing residents with growing families to build illegally.

In a 1998 report, the Israeli human rights groups Betselem and Hamoked accused authorities of waging a campaign of "silent transfer" of Arabs from east Jerusalem to undermine Palestinian demands to

make the sector the capital of a future independent state.

Since Israel annexed east

Jerusalem in 1967, it has settled more than 160,000

Jews in the area. A census by the Palestinian National Authority a year ago put the Palestinian population of the city at around 200,000, while Israel says about 160,000 Arabs live there.

The international communi-

ty has never recognised

the Israeli claim to east

Jerusalem and the future

status of the city is to be

negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians under the Oslo peace accords.

The communications centre hit

Monday is one of a series which relays information along the pipeline linking the northern Iraqi oil fields of Kirkuk to the Turkish port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean.

On Tuesday afternoon, metal debris was still scattered up to 100 metres away from what remained of the building. A nearby aerial was intact and standing, but its connecting wires had been blasted away.

He said the one person killed and nine others injured in Monday's air raid were all employees of the centre.

At the United Nations, the coordinator of the programme overseeing distribution of humanitarian supplies to the occupied territories since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The revenues are used to import humanitarian supplies for Iraq's 22 million population, living under sanctions since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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Kuwait.

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## Israel, Lebanon tell EU they want to lower tensions

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel and Lebanon have told the European Union's (EU's) special Middle East envoy they want to reduce tensions along their border, a senior EU official said on Tuesday. "The main message from both sides was that they wanted to avoid an escalation," said Bernardino Leon Groff, a senior adviser to EU envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos.

He said Moratinos had spoken to Lebanese Prime Minister Salim Hoss and to Israel's coordinator of activities in south Lebanon, Uri Lubrani, by telephone on Monday.

The contacts followed an Israeli air offensive launched on Sunday night on Hezbollah guerrilla targets in Lebanon.

"We asked them to do their utmost to restore calm. We are trying to avoid an escalation of violence,"

and a journalist were killed in a roadside bombing by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone.

The brigadier general, Erez Gerstein, was the highest ranking Israeli soldier to be killed in combat in Lebanon since Israel's 1982 Lebanese invasion.

"We asked them to do their utmost to restore calm. We are trying to avoid an escalation of violence,"

Leon Groff told Reuters by telephone from Brussels.

The U.S. and Russia have also urged both sides to exercise restraint.

Hezbollah is fighting to oust Israel and its South Lebanon Army militia ally from Israel's self-declared 15 km wide security zone in south Lebanon. Israel set up the zone in 1985 to protect its northern towns against cross-border attacks.



**WELCOME HOME:** Palestinian Mohammad Nimir Al Ali is hugged by his sister outside the Lebanese army barrack in the southern ancient Lebanese city of Tyre shortly after he was released from an Israeli jail where he served ten years for anti-Israeli activities. Ali and another Lebanese national were handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross at the border town of Naqoura and then transferred to the Lebanese army (AFP photo)

## Lebanon scoffs at threats as ballot box gimmick

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon scoffed Tuesday at Israeli threats of harsh reprisals after a spate of deadly attacks by Islamist guerrillas, declaring that the Jewish state has failed to achieve its goals even after 21 years of occupation.

While its troops have been placed on maximum alert, Lebanon does not appear to expect Israel to act on vows to avenge its mounting troop losses in its northern neighbour, considering the warnings mere ballot box gimmicks.

"What came out of the Israeli guns was smoke instead of fire after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu weighed up his options," said the editorial in the leading Al Nahar newspaper.

Netanyahu seems to have decided that "aggression against southern Lebanon does not pay, especially ahead of the important May 17 elections," it said.

Both Netanyahu and his main rival, Labour Party leader Ehud Barak, vowed Tuesday to withdraw within a year from Lebanon where

Israel has lost more than 1,200 troops since it first invaded in 1978.

"The current situation does not allow Israel to launch a large-scale military operation," said Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual guide of pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim Hezbollah group in Lebanon.

"The declarations of the Israeli leaders show their indecisiveness on what actions to follow and that they have no plan to deal with the situation," he said in remarks published Tuesday.

Netanyahu announced Monday a "new policy" of harsher reprisals after the deaths of seven Israelis in Lebanon in less than a week in attacks by guerrillas from the Iranian- and Syrian-backed Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah.

But Israel's guns have been silent since Sunday night.

"Implementing these threats will bring nothing new to Israel, as 21 years of occupation has brought

nothing, because Israel did not succeed in meeting any of its objectives, whether to set up a safe border or sign a peace treaty," the pro-Syrian Al Safir daily said.

Fadlallah said former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres lost a 1996 election because of the Grapes of Wrath offensive when 175 Lebanese were killed, most of them civilians, including 105 refugees at a UN base in Cana.

Israel has invaded its northern neighbour twice, in 1978 and 1982, but repeated military operations have been unable to crush resistance groups.

Hezbollah, which spearheads the guerrilla war against the occupation and has proven to be able to mobilise up to 7,000 combatants for emergencies, is the most persistent thorn in the Jewish state's side.

The group's leaders have repeatedly said that residents of northern Israel "cannot live in peace and security as long as our families in southern Lebanon continue to be harmed."

The Christian newspaper Al Anwar newspaper said

there was little chance of a large-scale Israeli military operation into Lebanon, adding that Israel "can now only carry out limited strikes against Hezbollah."

Hezbollah's deadly attacks have provoked a surge in demands across Israel for a pullout from the Lebanese "quagmire" and dealt a blow to the Israeli army's tough image.

Last year, Netanyahu said he accepted U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, adopted in 1978, which calls for Israel to withdraw "forthwith," although he is demanding security guarantees from the Lebanese government.

"The Israelis have tried everything from invasions, occupations, military operations and daily bombardments, but it is time for them to acknowledge that withdrawal is the only alternative to bring peace and security," a Lebanese government official said.

## Rebel attack said repelled in oil-rich state

KHARTOUM (R) — A pro-government Sudanese militia repelled an attack by southern rebels in oil-rich Unity state, killing 47 of them and taking 58 prisoner, a member of Sudan's parliament said in remarks published on Tuesday.

The private Al Usba newspaper quoted legislator Tout Galouk as saying Major General Pauline Matip's forces had inflicted heavy losses on rebels in Mayom province in Unity state.

Galouk did not say when the main rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had launched the attack, but said

Matip's forces were in complete control of the area. No independent account of the fighting was available.

The Islamist Khartoum government has been fighting a 15-year war with the SPLA in the mainly Christian and anti-muslim south.

Rick Machar, chairman of the coordinating council that rules the south for Khartoum, was quoted on Tuesday as saying his party was holding talks with SPLA representatives.

Members of the United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF), the political party formed by several southern former rebel factions that

made peace with Khartoum in 1997, were reported to be holding their third day of talks with the SPLA on Tuesday.

The talks, in the SPLA-held area of Warab in Bahr Al Ghazal state, were the first conducted by the UDSF factions as a separate body and not as part of a government delegation.

The UDSF delegation is led by Makane Youk, a state minister in the state-owned national development corporation. Salva Kiir, deputy to SPLA leader John Garang, is speaking for the SPLA.

## Iran's municipal elections a resounding success for women

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian women have put up a strong showing in the country's first ever municipal elections, a trend highlighted by the victory of reformist President Mohammad Khatami's sister.

Fatemeh Khatami told AFP Tuesday she garnered 16,000 votes, three times more than her closest rival, in the central desert town of Ardakan, the home of the Khatami family, and where the president was born.

"I considered that my age prevented me from undertaking such activities, but the people encouraged me to stand," said the 61-year-old mother of six.

"I have always worked to propagate culture and religion, but now we shall have to provide remedies for people's problems," she said. "It's still too early to say what we're going to do but what is certain is that I want to be of service to the people," she added.

Her election is a reflection in part of her brother's popularity, and the respect in which the Khatami family is held locally, but it is also symptomatic of the success of women candidates throughout the country as shown in results so far from Friday's poll.

The success of the women was particularly striking in that they accounted for only a small minority of candidates — just 4,000 of the 300,000 hopefuls standing. Preliminary figures indicate that two women won council seats in the holy city of Qom, 130 km south of Tehran.

Women did very well in the northern province of Gilan on the Caspian where 25 women were elected out of the 37 standing in various localities. In Shiraz in the south, a woman standing as a reformist took second place, while in Bahar, a large town in the western province of Hamadan, women reformers came first, second and third. In Urumiyeh, capital of the Turkish frontier province

of west Azerbaijan, a woman reformer is leading the poll.

The female vote contributed largely to Khatami's success in the 1997 presidential election, and the overall results of the municipals so far shows that his backers reformists still have the wind in their sails.

In Tehran, seen as the key battleground between reformers and conservatives Khatami supporters are set to win at least 12 out of the capital's 15

seats.

Abedullah Nouri, a former interior minister impeached by the conservative parliament last year after allowing pro-Khatami demonstrations which led to clashes with hardliners, is leading the count.

Apart from Nouri, four other top aides of the president were also well ahead — including woman, Jamileh Kadivar, wife of Culture Minister Attaollah Mohajerani.

And in counts in the provinces, reformers

appeared well-placed in all of the three-quarters of councils which had published some results by Monday, giving them a solid power base from which to challenge the conservatives' domination of parliament in general elections next spring.

In a speech to a women's university in Tehran Tuesday Khatami spoke once again in favour of "equality of rights between men and women," and said women should be evaluated in their public and professional life "in accordance with their qualities, regardless of their sex."

Iran already has 13 women members of parliament, and one women vice president. Massumeh Ebtekar.

However, the selection bodies which have to vet candidates have always turned down women standing for the presidential election or for the Council of Experts, which appoints the country's supreme spiritual leader.

**JORDAN TELEVISION**  
Tel. 4773111-19  
**PROGRAMME TWO**

19:10 News headlines  
19:35 Doc. — Perspective  
20:00 News in Arabic (Channel 2 links up with channel 1)  
20:30 Programme on the late His Majesty King Hussein  
21:00 Islamic History in Jordan  
21:30 ...On the Banks of Jordan  
22:00 ...News in English  
22:10 Doc. — National Geographic  
23:00 ...News in Arabic (Channel 2 links up with channel 1)

### PRAYER TIMES

04:41 ...Fajr  
05:58 ...(Sunrise) Duha  
11:48 ...Dhuhr  
15:05 ...Asr  
17:37 ...Maghreb  
18:54 ...Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590  
Terra Santa Church Tel. 4622366  
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811  
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 5865897

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

**GERMAN-SPEAKING EVANGELICAL CONGREGATION** Tel. 5683404  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932  
St. John the Baptist at De La Salle College Tel. 5661757  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440  
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138  
Church of Presentation, Sweifieh Tel. 5920146  
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190  
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679  
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052  
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331  
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

**WEATHER**  
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures are expected to dip slightly. Scattered showers are expected in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom. Winds will be westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, AMMAN: Firas Pharmacy ..... 5661912

Al Salam Pharmacy ..... 5636730  
Maydad Pharmacy ..... 5537004  
Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

**IRBID:**  
Amman ..... 06/14  
Dr. Ghazi Ta'amneh (02)250080  
Fou'ad Pharmacy (02)275360

**ZARQA:**

Dr. Akram Haddad (05)985550

Palestine Pharmacy (05)983562

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 15, Aqaba 22

Humidity readings: Amman 54 per cent. Aqaba 35 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun ..... 03/10

Jerash ..... 06/16

Um Qays ..... 07/15

Madaba ..... 06/15

Petra ..... 03/19

Dead Sea ..... 10/22

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY**

Dr. Tawfiq Qub'a'in ..... 4623029

Dr. Awni Hawamdeh ..... 5332350

Dr. Ghalib Zawadeh ..... 4126011

Dr. Khalidoun Asfour ..... 5332600

Abdali Tel. Repairs ..... 5661101

AMMAN: Firas Pharmacy ..... 5661912

Water Authority ..... 5680100

Electricity Authority ..... 5815615

Electric Power Co. ..... 4636381

RJ Flight Information ..... 44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport ..... 44-53200

**HOSPITALS**

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ..... 5921199

The Islamic Abdi ..... 5661131/7

Hussein Medical Centre ..... 5856836

Luzmila ..... 4630195

Khalidi Maternity ..... 4644281/6

Akileh Maternity ..... 4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 4642362

Mallah, J. Amman ..... 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 5607071

Shmeisani Hospital ..... 5607431

Jordan Hospital ..... 5607550

University Hospital ..... 5335444

Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 4777101/3

Al-Bashir ..... 4775111/26

Army, Marka ..... 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital ..... 5157100

Amal Hospital ..... 5607155

# Home News

## BRIEFS

Police recover  
stolen Israeli car

Wadi Rayan  
events continue

Arab countries  
call for peace  
in Syria

ate

### News in brief

#### Cooler weather on the way

AMMAN (Petra) — The weather will be partly cloudy with a possibility of scattered showers of rain in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom, Meteorology Department sources said Tuesday. The sources expected a slight drop in temperatures.

#### Exports drop by two per cent

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's exports in 1998 totalled JD1,044 million compared with JD1,067 million in 1997 — a decrease of 2.2 per cent, said Hussein Shbathreh, director general of the General Statistics Department. Shbathreh added that national imports amounted to JD2,715 million in 1998, compared with JD2,908 in 1997, thus registering a 6.6 per cent decrease.

#### WHAT'S GOING ON FILM

\* German film "Himmel Ohne Sterne" (with subtitles in English) at Goethe-Institut, Jabal Amman at 7:30 p.m.

#### Save water ... every drop counts!



**CONDOLENCES:** Her Majesty Queen Noor and HRH Princess Rania Abdullah receive Orthodox Christian clergy from Karak on Tuesday at Basman Palace. Jordanian and U.N. officials and members of the Queen's organisations also offered condolences at the Royal Court. Queen Noor and Princess Rania also met a delegation from the National Organisation of Arab-American Women and the Institute of Arab-American Women, who flew to Jordan to pay their condolences to the Queen (photo by Crystal)

## Jordan, Japan sign \$21.2 million agreement to support balance of payments, economic reform

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Japan yesterday signed a \$21.2 million grant agreement to support Jordan's balance of payments and economic reform programme.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Planning Nabil Ammari and Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Koichi Matsumoto in the presence of the Japanese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Nobutaka Machimura, who arrived in Jordan yesterday on a two-day visit.

The grant can be used for the payment of non-military imports from any country.

During his visit, he will hold talks with His Majesty King Abdullah and Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on bilateral relations and the Middle East peace process.

Yesterday, Her Majesty Queen Noor received the Japanese secretary and his wife Junko Machimura, who is accompanying him on the visit, at Bab Al Salam Palace. The secretary and his wife offered their condolences on the death of His Majesty King Hussein.

During Machimura's visit, a second grant agreement will be signed. The \$4.3 million grant will be used to improve equipment for a central workshop of road construction and maintenance machinery. This project will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of road construction through the supply of maintenance equipment for construction machinery and vehicles in the central workshop.

The Ministry of Public Works and Housing is constructing the new workshop in Zarqa.

The Japanese secretary's visit is part of an 11-day regional tour that began on Feb. 27 and will end March 9. He will also visit Turkey, Israel, the Palestinian self-rule territories, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

During his visit to Israel, Machimura will tour areas of the Golan Heights where the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force troops are stationed.

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, Jordan and Japan have developed ties that relate to almost every aspect of life: political, cultural, trade, economic, youth and technology.

Japanese official visits to Jordan are frequent. The most recent was a visit in January by the Japanese foreign minister.

Jordan is the largest per capita recipient of Japan's official development assistance of all developing countries. In addition to the assistance agreements signed during Machimura's visit, the Japanese contribution to Jordan has reached \$145 million in the last 12 months; \$63 million for the Greater Amman Water Supply System Improvement Project that aims to double the capital's water supply through the Zai Water Treatment Plant and \$63 million for the Tourism Sector Development Project.

## Saudi delegation expected soon to discuss investments, labour transfers

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Information Minister Nasser Judeh on Tuesday said that a Saudi delegation is expected here soon to discuss new Saudi investments in the country in line with pledges made last month to extend financial assistance to Jordan.

No date has been set for the visit, but Judeh, who was speaking to reporters during a weekly press briefing, said that among the issues expected to be discussed during the visit are ways to intensify bilateral trade.

The visit was agreed on during meetings in Riyadh last month between Saudi officials and a senior Jordanian eco-

nomic delegation, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Taher Kana'an, Judeh added. The Jordanian team met with Saudi finance and trade ministers and the head of the Saudi Development Fund (SDF).

The delegation also discussed with the SDF officials ways to finance certain number of projects in Jordan in line with projects that had been financed by the fund in the Kingdom, before it halted cooperation with Jordan following Amman's perceived tilt towards Iraq during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Judeh said "there is a Saudi desire to discuss these projects." The projects would be mostly in the southern areas of the Kingdom, and would be

aimed "at increasing productivity and creating job opportunities there."

"The two sides also discussed facilitating the transfer of the Jordanian workforce to Saudi Arabia," he added.

The minister did not give any information about the volume of the expected Saudi assistance, but local news reports have indicated it ranges from \$400-\$700 million in investments and direct assistance.

Following the death of King Hussein, many countries, especially the U.S., Germany and some Gulf states, pledged to extend assistance to Jordanian economy through direct loans or debt forgiveness.

## Education sector faces reform: New texts and teacher ranking under study

By Susan Resheq

AMMAN — The Ministry of Education is forging ahead with plans to introduce a comprehensive modern school curriculum in an effort to reform the educational system.

The ministry will also introduce a new hierarchy for public school teachers, giving them professional titles that reflect their actual positions and responsibilities.

"We are trying to renew scholastic books both in form and in content," Education Ministry Secretary General Izzat Jaradat told a press conference on Monday.

He said under the new plan, the ministry, which in the past formed committees to draft accredited school text books, instead will ask local publishing houses to work on and submit texts which could be used for teaching at state-run schools.

Such competition, officials said, would encourage authors to be innovative to generate students' interest. The ministry believes that this would reflect positively on the quality of education as most students complain of a dull curriculum that relies more on memorisation than on research and analysis.

"There will be one accredited curriculum for the elementary, preparatory and secondary classes, but the various publishing houses will come up with different books and the best will be chosen," Jaradat added.

Private schools normally adopt the state syllabus but each adds extra books to complement the standard system.

The first degree title will be given to teachers with five to six years of teaching experience and must have a master's degree, he added.

The specialised title will be granted to those with 15 years teaching experience who hold a Ph.D.

The system will be discussed soon by the Higher Council for Education, which is chaired by HRH Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad.

Jaradat also said the ministry plans to introduce English as a second language at the elementary level instead of waiting for the preparatory stage. Private schools teach English as a second language from grade one.

The ministry is also planning to introduce French as a second language for secondary classes, but will not make the language course compulsory. At present, only some private schools teach French as a third language.

Jaradat denied that the ministry had shelved plans to gradually cancel the state's high school general certificate exam, known as the Tawjihi.

"We are studying the plan to develop the Tawjihi exams and all matters related to that will be discussed in the future meetings of the Higher Council."

The controversial plan was promoted by Education Minister Fawzi Gharibeh after he took the post in August.

He mentioned that the ministry may unify the academic stream, the scientific and literary streams for senior students.

## World Bank records Dana's global importance in documentary

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The Dana Wildlands Reserve is to be featured in a documentary film highlighting a local NGO's endeavours to strike a balance between environmental preservation and sustainable development.

The Dana project, conducted by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), has become an international model of integrated conservation and sustainable development since its inception in 1993.

A World Bank technical crew recently concluded a three-day shoot in the reserve, that grows in global importance every year.

Khaled Irani, director general of the RSCN, said, "[The World Bank] has been impressed with the achievements in Dana."

Dana, lying on the crest of the Great Rift Valley, is a 300-square-kilometre area of rugged landscape in Tafila Governorate, about 50 kilometres north of Petra, and a two-hour drive south of Amman. It sweeps down a series of mountain ridges, from a 1,500-metre high plateau near Qasesyeh area to the desert plains of Wadi Araba.

Steep wadis slice through the mountains, often lined

with a lush growth of trees and shrubs. Dana's geology is as varied as its landscape: It progresses from limestone to sandstone to granite, all carved and weathered by wind and water and flushed in pastel shades of pink, brown, and grey.

The Dana project is sponsored by the government, the RSCN, the World Bank, the United Nations Develop-

ment Programme and the Global Environment Facility — the funding mechanism under which the project was implemented.

Last May, the \$3.3 million reserve project caught the eye of the International Conservation Committee, which selected Dana out of 400 pilot projects, as an exemplary case study on integrated conservation and

the outcome of a meeting by the economic organisations to review the idea of two-day weekend and said the organi-

biodiversity, community-based sustainable development, income-generation and tourism programmes.

The case study was examined then by a workshop organised in Washington in collaboration with a number of international conservation bodies such as the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation,

the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the World Bank's Common Property Resource Management Network.

According to the RSCN, the Dana project shows how such income-generating schemes can be used to help regulate damaging resource-exploitation practices and promote positive attitudes toward conservation initiatives.

It also underlined the benefits of institutional networking to enable community-based approaches to be effectively implemented and sustained.

When the project began, the RSCN found that in order to address problems between local communities and Dana, institutional changes had to be made at two main levels: at the site, with the development of income-generating activities for local people linked

to the protected area, and at the organisational level, with the restructuring of the RSCN to ensure it had the technical and financial capability to initiate and manage a community-based conservation programme.

The income-generating schemes introduced within and around the reserve were intended to provide local residents with financial and social benefits from the reserve and compensate for imposed restrictions such as grazing control.

The RSCN has included enterprises such as fruit drying and processing facilities, medicinal and culinary herb production, jewellery-making from local products and semi-precious stones and extensive tourism services.

The enterprises were developed with a strong emphasis on a marketing strategy that employed conservation philosophy and addressed the reserve as the principal selling point of the newly-developed products and services.

The RSCN also created a hook to attract tourists to the reserve and consumers of Dana products: Services and products are "sold" on the basis that consumers can also play a role in protecting wildlife and supporting the local economy.

A new goat-raising

scheme aims to enable bedouin in the western part

revealing a much higher level of support and cooperation.

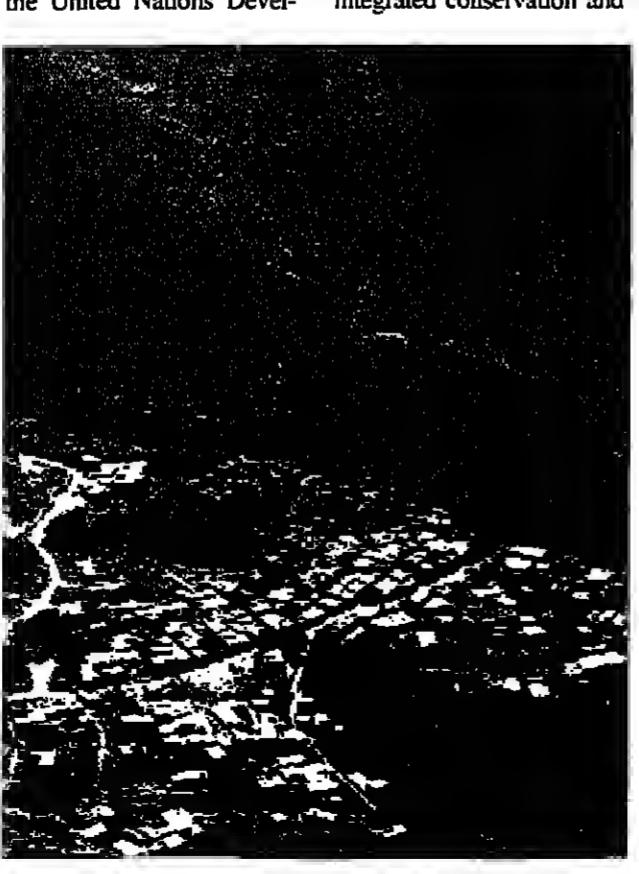
The reason for adopting a market-led approach was to demonstrate to local communities that the nature reserve itself could provide the means to establish small businesses and generate employment opportunities that would supplement or replace subsistence farming and other income-generating activities they were engaged in before the reserve existed," the report read.

Last June, the 33-year-old RSCN, which manages 1,000 square-kilometre six nature reserves and plans to

set up another seven, complained that if the government reintroduces copper-mining in Dana's Wadi Faynan, which was a major copper-mining and smelting centres 6,500 years ago, the reserve will be "destroyed."

"The reintroduction of the copper mining is a big worry facing the reserve," a society representative said. "Non-sustainable copper mining in the area will destroy it forever."

In 1993, the government announced that it had no intention of mining the area, but some environmentalists said authorities have shown renewed interest.



of Dana to sell their animals at better prices.

After three years of operation, Dana income-generating activities have raised \$260,000 from sales and tourism receipts, created 38 new jobs and provided increased financial benefits to over 140 people, according to an RSCN report.

Income from tourism receipts in 1997 alone covered 60 per cent of the reserve's running costs. Seventy per cent of visitors were Jordanians.

Over the years, the RSCN has witnessed "a notable shift" in the attitude of local people towards the reserve.



## 5 tourists killed in rescue attempt in Uganda

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Five foreign tourists were killed and as seven others rescued Tuesday in an army operation to free at least 14 foreigners taken hostage by Rwandan Hutu rebels in southwestern Uganda.

Police in the Ugandan capital said the five tourists died when they were caught in an exchange of gunfire between the rebels and Ugandan army troops. The rescue operation was carried out Tuesday morning in a rain forest, police spokesman Eric Naigambi told the Associated Press.

"Five tourists were killed in the crossing during the rescue operation, and seven have been rescued," he said. Names and nationalities of the tourists were not immediately available.

He said the bodies were taken to Kambuga hospital in Rukungiri, a district in western Uganda.

Three Americans, six Britons, three New Zealanders, an Australian and a Swiss were among those kidnapped by the Congo-based rebels late Sunday at campgrounds on the edge of Bwindi National Park, known as the impenetrable forest, the starting point for visitors hoping to glimpse rare mountain gorillas.

The U.S. embassy in Kampala said it was told that six, not seven, of the western hostages had been released and that five bodies had been recovered. "Three people are still being held," said Sara Stryker, assistant political affairs officer.

She said officials were trying to establish the tourists' identities and notify their next of kin.

The Ugandan government imposed a news blackout on the situation Tuesday, and Defense Minister Stephen Kavuma said the government planned to read a statement to parliament later in the afternoon.

British and American diplomats planned to travel Tuesday to the campground where the tourists were taken. A British foreign office spokesman, speaking on customary terms of anonymity, did not detail what plans were for the diplomats' visit Tuesday.

Britain's Foreign Office said one of the Britons abducted also holds New Zealand citizenship.

The three New Zealanders captured were possibly travelling on British passports, said James Funnell, a spokesman for New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Australian officials said a man from Sydney was also among the hostages, and that four other Australians were kidnapped, but later released.

Michael Cook, British high commissioner in the former British colony, met with Ugandan minister of state Amama Mbabazi Monday to discuss the kidnappings, the British Foreign Office spokesman said. He said that Britain was updating its travel advice, and warned against travelling to Uganda's border area with Rwanda and Congo.



Linda Adams from California, who escaped from the hands of her kidnappers in Uganda by pretending to be asthmatic, reacts to the news of the deaths of her fellow captives at Jomo Kenyatta Airport. The rebels killed five of the tourists, and seven others were rescued by police (Reuters photo)

Unconfirmed reports from private tour operators Mooday said one tourist and two Ugandans had been killed in the kidnapping, one of them an employee of the state-owned Uganda wildlife authority. Details on the slain tourist were not known.

France's deputy ambassador to Uganda, Anne Peltier, was at the park when the rebels attacked and said she helped negotiate the release of nine other tourists.

"We were hearing a lot of firing all around the tent where we were sleeping, and suddenly some soldiers came in the tent and they

asked for money, for jewellery, for waives. They took everything... we had of some value," Ms. Peltier told Melbourne, Australia, Radio Station 3AW.

She said the camp tents were burned, so the people who were taken hostage took refuge in a nearby village until police and the army arrived.

Among those who escaped was Elizabeth Garland, 29, an anthropology student at the University of Chicago. She spoke to her father, James Garland, Monday to tell him she was safe.

"She said she was awakened by gunfire all around

her and apparently a raid of 100 to 150 Hutu rebels came in armed and started taking hostages," James Garland said.

"She said they were looking specifically for Americans and would release hostages if they were not American or British."

Fighting between the Rwandan Hutu rebels and the Uganda people's defence forces continued Monday along the forested border.

The Hutu rebels fled Rwanda after they took part in a 1994 genocide of more than 500,000 minority Tutsis and politically mod-

erate butus. They have been crossing the border from bases in eastern Congo, often ambushing vehicles and kidnapping or killing the passengers in both Uganda and Rwanda.

In August, the rebels kidnapped four foreign tourists and seven Congolese guides and porters on a trek to observe the gorillas. They later released a Canadian tourist and all the Congolese escorts in exchange for the publication of a statement of their objectives.

The three other tourists — two Swedes and one New Zealander — have not been heard from since.

## Hindu nationalists hope for miracle on crucial vote

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's ruling Hindu nationalists, who face certain defeat in a parliamentary vote over a state's sacking, said Tuesday they still hold out hope for a face-saving victory.

The nationalists also said they will launch a week-long "anti-betrayal" drive Wednesday to protest a move by the main opposition Congress Party to force the reinstatement of the sacked Bihar state government.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) scraped through with a majority of 29 votes in parliament's lower house during Friday's vote on last month's dismissal of the state government.

The BJP-led coalition government would have to repeat its performance in the upper house, where they clearly face defeat as the Congress vows to vote against a resolution seeking approval for the sacking.

The Congress Party itself had dismissed dozens of state governments when it was in power, Naidu argued.

"We now want to know what is the rationale behind the Congress not supporting the dismissal. We want to know why they favour the rule of jungle in Bihar," Naidu said.

The BJP had cited a breakdown in law and order as the main reason for imposing direct rule in the eastern state bordering Nepal.

Laloo Prasad Yadav, the charismatic chief of Bihar's sacked centrist RJD Party, has warned the BJP would be stripped of its dignity during the Rajya Sabha vote.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee removed the Bihar government on Feb. 19, citing rampant crime following the massacre of 11 poor farmers by a private militia of landlords there.

The BJP was sure the move would be endorsed in both houses of parliament with the support of the Congress, which then vowed to kick out the resolution from the Rajya Sabha, where the BJP is outnumbered.

"We have various options before us," Naidu asserted and said the Hindu nationalists hoped for a miracle during the looming vote in the upper house, or the Rajya Sabha.

"We know we do not have a majority in Rajya Sabha but wisdom can still dawn on some opposition parties."

## Hundreds of Indonesian settlers leaving East Timor

JAKARTA (AP) — Hundreds of settlers from Indonesian provinces are pulling out of the troubled territory of East Timor amid growing expectations that it will opt for independence, reports said Tuesday.

Around 800 settlers packed a passenger ship from the provincial capital of Dili for Surabaya city and Jakarta Tuesday, the Suara Pembaruan evening daily said.

Speaking of the Congress, which initially backed the BJP on the Bihari state's sacking, Naidu said the Hindu nationalists will stage their week-long protest against the opposition party's U-turn.

"We will strike at the very roots of the Congress to expose their double standards," the BJP spokesman said.

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East Timor governor Jose Abilio Soares had pleaded with settlers not to leave and assured them of their safety, the official Antara news agency said.

"Essentially there is nothing to be afraid of because security forces from the military and the police have anticipated all possible reactions," Soares was quoted by Antara as saying.

Abilio also pleaded to teachers, who are mostly migrants, not to leave East Timor, after a protest Sunday by 300 teachers at the Dili government sub-district office for lack of security for non-ethnic Timorese in the territory.

Several banks in Dili have seen a rush of panicky customers wanting to close their accounts, it added without giving figures.

Monday cars and motorcycles laden with household goods formed a long line to a ferry sailing for northern Atauro island in Maluku province, it said.

Also Sunday Antara reported some 300 trucks had been transporting the household goods of families fearful of independence for East Timor to neighbouring West Timor through the border town of Bobonaro.

Tensions have been rising in East Timor since Indonesia announced on

Jan. 27 that it would consider independence for the territory should its residents reject a broad autonomy offer. Groups in favour or against independence have been consolidating their forces.

Jakarta annexed East Timor in 1976 after the military invaded the former Portuguese colony the previous year. The U.N. and most other countries did not recognise the move and view Portugal as the official administrator in the territory.

The United Nations since 1984 has mediated talks between Indonesia and Portugal and the two sides are scheduled to meet in New York March 9 to finalise the autonomy offer.

## Japan says time to make flag, anthem official

TOKYO (R) — Japan said Tuesday it will consider legislating to make the rising sun flag and a song that are both widely seen as symbols of the country's militarism its official flag and anthem.

"The time has come to fundamentally consider the status of the national flag and the national anthem as one of the conclusive points of the end of the 20th century," top government spokesman Hiromu Nonaka said.

The "hinomaru" (rising sun) flag and anthem have no legal or constitutional status as national symbols. The government has avoided legislating on the subject for fear of an all-out ideological confrontation.

The hinomaru, meaning "sun circle or emblem," with a red disc in the centre of a white field, has been used to identify Japan's merchant and official ships

since the eighth century. But during the period of Japan's World War Two military expansion into Asia, the flag was widely seen as a symbol of the country's militarism and anthem.

Even more controversial, perhaps, is the slow anthem called "kimigayo," meaning "his majesty's reign," in which the words in ancient Japanese praise the emperor and hope his rule may last forever.

The government's controversial overture came two days after a high school principal in Hiroshima hanged himself over what police believe was a disagreement over the singing of kimigayo at a graduation ceremony.

"The problem is that the flag and anthem have been forced on Japanese citizens through customary use," Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa told reporters Tuesday.

"The way to solve the issue is to pass laws on a national flag and an anthem," he said.

But he said a national flag and anthem should not

be forced on schools even if they were legally designated as illegal.

"People do not accept the hinomaru because of its history as an emblem of invasions by Japan... The kimigayo does not suit the system of the constitution, in which sovereignty resides with the people," Fuwa added.

Takenori Kanzaki, leader of the Buddhist-backed Komeito teien government party, said his party would support the government's plan and said the rising sun flag and the kimigayo anthem no longer had any links with militarism.

"The hinomaru is suitable as the national flag and the kimigayo anthem is also accepted by the Japanese people. They do not have any links to the revival of militarism," Kanzaki told reporters.

Jordan Times, Wednesday, March 3, 1999

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Yeltsin remains in stable condition, recovering in hospital

MOSCOW (AP) — President Boris Yeltsin was in stable condition and continued receiving treatment for a recurring ulcer that sent him to the hospital, his press centre said Tuesday. Yeltsin, 68, was hospitalised Saturday after complaining of stomach pains, only days after he had reportedly recovered fully from a bleeding ulcer. He spent two weeks in a hospital last month when the ailment first hit and convalesced for another two weeks at a sanatorium. He had been noticeably more active in the last two weeks, making frequent trips to the Kremlin and meeting foreign leaders. Doctors said the heavier workload was in part to blame for the ulcer's recurrence. Doctors continued treating the president as planned Tuesday and said his condition was improving, a presidential spokeswoman said. This time around, he has been told to keep out of the office and get plenty of rest, and will likely remain in the hospital for a week. Yeltsin's ulcer is the latest in a long string of illnesses that have kept him sidelined for weeks at a time since he was reelected in 1996.

### Japan minister draws fire for Schwarzenegger favour

TOKYO (R) — A government minister who flexed his muscles to let actor Arnold Schwarzenegger into Japan without a passport came under fire for his efforts in parliament Tuesday. Justice Minister Shoaburo Nakamura faced a barrage of criticism for failing to submit to authorities a report filed by Schwarzenegger asking for permission to enter Japan without a passport last October. Nakamura, whose ministry oversees immigration, admitted in parliament he had kept the form that Schwarzenegger filled out rather than forwarding it to the appropriate authorities. At the time of the incident, he reportedly joked that he would be in trouble with his wife and daughter unless he helped the famous actor. Pressed on the matter Tuesday, Nakamura admitted he and his family were fans of the star of such films as "Terminator," but he blamed the mix-up on his secretaries. "I told my secretaries to return the form (to the appropriate section), but they apparently forgot," the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper quoted Nakamura as saying. "I did not take it home, he was quoted as saying. The newspaper said Nakamura added: "The cabinet will check this." Top government spokesman Hiromu Nonaka Tuesday called Nakamura's answers "unsatisfactory." Justice ministry officials said they had no comment. Schwarzenegger was in Japan along with director Steven Spielberg to attend groundbreaking ceremonies for a Universal Studios theme park.

### UNHCR urges Germany to ease citizenship for refugees

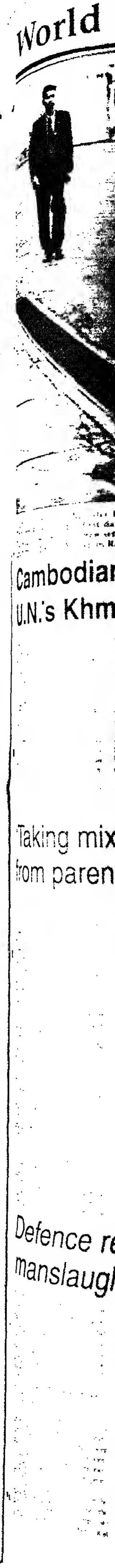
BONN (AP) — The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Tuesday urged Germany to make it easier for refugees to gain German citizenship. A statement from the UNHCR office in Bonn pointed out that, under draft legislation, only people with residence permits could request German nationality. Refugees who did not have the right of asylum in Germany but were allowed to remain under the terms of the Geneva convention would not qualify for citizenship as they did not have residence permits, the UNHCR said. The U.N. authority asked the federal and regional governments to modify draft legislation to make it possible for such refugees to become German citizens. German Interior Minister Otto Schily was scheduled to present a draft nationality code this month with a view to its adoption as law by the end of May. Germany received one-third of all asylum requests in the European Union last year, making it the biggest destination in Europe. Last month UNHCR chief Sadako Ogata criticised industrialised countries, especially in Europe, for pursuing overly restrictive refugee policies with a view to immigration controls and domestic security.

### Police continue to hold 3 suspects, release 2 in Omagh bombing

DUBLIN; Ireland (AP) — Police continued to question three suspects Tuesday in connection with last year's deadly car bombing in Omagh, the worst single atrocity in the 30-year conflict over British-ruled northern Ireland. Two other suspects were released. Police in both parts of Ireland have been involved in an ongoing effort to secure charges against the Irish Republican Army dissidents responsible for the Aug. 15 blast that killed 29 people and wounded 370. More than 60 people have been arrested, but so far only one man has been charged in connection with the bombing. Arrests over the weekend and Monday brought to five the total number of people being interrogated by Irish police. However, by Tuesday morning, two of the suspects had been released. One was allowed to leave Monday night; the second was freed Tuesday morning. Under an Irish anti-terrorism law strengthened after the Omagh bombing, the suspects can be questioned for up to 72 hours before being charged or released. The dissidents responsible for the attack on the religiously mixed northern Ireland town broke away from the IRA following the outlawed group's July 1997 ceasefire. They oppose the decision of the IRA's allied Sinn Fein party to accept the Belfast peace accord of April 1998, which proposed creating a new Protestant-Catholic government for Northern Ireland, a state the IRA has traditionally sought to abolish.

### Italian hospitalised for hallucinations after Internet spree

ROME (AP) — An Italian who had spent the greater part of three days in front of a computer screen surfing the Internet has been hospitalised with hallucinations. La Repubblica reported Tuesday. The man, suffering from delirium and mental confusion, was being treated for "acute Internet intoxication," the newspaper said. It gave no further details. Rome psychiatrist Tonino Cantelmi said he believed several hundred people had overdosed on the net in the Italian capital alone. Most were aged around 30, single, educated and had never more than 10 hours a day — between the office and home — on the computer. Cantelmi said, "Anything that is a danger to health, Cantelmi warned."



# World News



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (center), flanked by security, waves as he enters the National Assembly in Phnom Penh, on the first day of the resumption of parliament sessions. Cambodia's parliament opened debate Tuesday on forming a new senate body and completing the terms of last year's coalition deal between Hun Sen and arch rival Prince Norodom Ranariddh (AFP photo)

## Cambodian government tight-lipped over U.N.'s Khmer Rouge recommendations

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's government was Tuesday remaining tight-lipped over a report by United Nations experts on whether to hold a tribunal for leaders of the genocidal Khmer Rouge.

The report, which the authors said was presented to Kofi Annan and the Cambodian government last week, could set in motion proceedings against leaders of the genocidal 1975 to 1979 regime recently welcomed here as defectors.

"We have no knowledge of the report and I don't know if he has received it," commented

Om Yienteng, a senior advisor to Prime Minister Hun Sen.

On his return from Tokyo Sunday, Hun Sen said he had yet to see the report, and added he was "too busy" to read it.

Hun Sen's coalition partner and parliamentary speaker Prince Norodom Ranariddh also Tuesday said he had also not seen the report, which contains conclusions from a visit by three international legal experts in November.

U.N. human rights officials said the Cambodian government would be given the report at least two weeks ahead of it

being released publicly, citing the sensitive nature of the prospect of a genocide trial.

The team of experts wrote the report following a formal plea to the U.N. made in 1997 by the then-co-premiers Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh for an international tribunal for the Khmer Rouge leadership, whose 1975 to 1979 regime claimed up to two million lives.

However in December Hun Sen accepted the defection of two key architects of Pol Pot's regime, chief ideologue Nuon Chea and public face Khieu Samphan, who live alongside

former Khmer Rouge number-three Ieng Sary in free retirement.

While Hun Sen has given his continued backing to a trial, he has also called for the foreign backers of the rebels and the entire 1970 to 1998 span of the civil war to go under investigation — terms outside the mandate of the report writers.

Officials both in the government and linked to former rebels have also stressed that a trial could spark renewed civil war and shatter Cambodia's fragile "national reconciliation."

## Shuttle diplomacy resumes over Kosovo peace plan

BELGRADE (AFP) — Western officials resumed their shuttle diplomacy between Belgrade and Pristina Tuesday searching for a breakthrough on Kosovo before peace talks resume in France on March 15. U.S. and European Union special envoys for Kosovo, Christopher Hill and Wolfgang Petritsch, arrived in Belgrade Tuesday for a series of meetings with top officials on an outline peace plan for the troubled province.

Belgrade has rejected the deployment of an international military force in Kosovo, seen by Western powers as a key element of any peace plan for the province.

Hill and Petritsch, who together with Russian diplomat Boris Mayorski mediated marathon peace talks in Rambouillet, France, last month, met Monday with Kosovar political leaders and said they were well on track to approve the plan.

"Things are moving very positively," Hill said after a full day of meetings in Pristina with representatives of Kosovo Albanians.

But it remains to be seen whether Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's regime will accept a 28,000-man NATO peacekeeping force as part of the plan which will be discussed again in France later this month.

Kosovo Albanian leaders and Serb authorities managed to forge some common ground on a possible peace accord during the marathon peace talks at Rambouillet last month.

But they ran into a snag over U.S. and European insistence that a NATO force be deployed in Kosovo to separate the warring sides.

Serbia, the dominant part of rump Yugoslavia, insisted during 17 days of negotiations that it would never let NATO troops on its soil.

Organisation for Security

and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) chairman Knut Vollebaek, who met with Milosevic Monday, said the Yugoslav leader "flatly rejected" the presence of an international military force in Kosovo.

"I told Milosevic that ... it is difficult to see how we can implement the part of the agreement that the OSCE is supposed to implement without military support," Vollebaek said.

The OSCE's verification mission in Kosovo (KVM) was deployed in the province "to build confidence, to prepare for elections," Vollebaek said.

"We need to keep the two sides apart so that we can do this job. Although we have excellent people here they are unarmed verifiers and they will not be in a position to do that," he said.

Meanwhile the Kosovars are continuing what they call a period of "consultations" on the ground, including with the

Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) which is fighting for the independence of Kosovo's 90 per cent ethnic Albanian majority.

In Pristina, Adem Demaci, KLA's hardline political representative, told reporters he had resigned from the position. Demaci, a former longtime political prisoner, agreed on August 14 to be the KLA's political representative. But he refused to join the Rambouillet talks and moderate KLA members have increasingly distanced themselves from him.

Serb sources Tuesday reported fighting between Serb government forces and KLA rebels erupted in the southwest of the province.

They accused ethnic Albanians of attacking police and Yugoslav army units near Djeneral Jankovic, close to the border with Macedonia.

## Despite Albright visit, China draws tough line on rights, Taiwan

BEIJING (AP) — Despite two days of often blunt talk by the U.S. Secretary of State, China gave no sign Tuesday it was prepared to compromise on human rights or a missile defence system for Taiwan.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao played down Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's criticisms of China's recent crackdown on political dissent, putting them down to cultural differences.

Zhu indirectly accused Washington of distorting North Korea's missile threat to drum up support for the theatre missile defence system and provide a pretext to make Taiwan a part of it.

The current situation on the Korean peninsula on the whole is stable. Therefore we

oppose the moves by some countries to make an excuse of this situation to strengthen military alliances and to build up defense capabilities that exceed legitimate needs," Zhu told reporters.

"That is not conducive to peace and stability and may trigger arms races and do no good to no countries in the final analysis," he added.

In her meetings, Albright told Chinese leaders that deploying a missile defence system was years away. She urged them to improve relations with Taiwan and to persuade Beijing's Communist neighbour North Korea to stop developing missiles.

Zhu reiterated that for China, Taiwan remains the most sensitive issue in Chinese-U.S. ties.

Taiwan is regarded by

Beijing as a rebel province to be retaken by force if necessary, but for much of the cold war the island was a staunch U.S. ally. Despite switching diplomatic ties to Beijing 20 years ago, Washington is obliged by law to help Taiwan maintain an adequate defence.

Zhu warned that including Taiwan in a missile defence system or selling it other weapons "constituted a gross interference in China's internal affairs." He further accused Taiwanese leaders of attempting "to obstruct the reunification of the motherland" by seeking to join the defence system.

Controversies aside, Zhu tried to put an optimistic cast on preparations Albright and Chinese leaders made for Premier Zhu Rongji's April

## Pat Buchanan making third try for White House

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire (AP) — Pat Buchanan, the conservative commentator whose low-budget, high-voltage campaigns shocked the Republican establishment in 1992 and 1996, is making a third run for the White House.

He was beginning Tuesday in New Hampshire, the first-in-the-nation primary state where he defeated eventual Republican nominee Bob Dole in 1996 and put a scare into President George Bush four years before that. His first campaign swing of the 2000 election will take him to 13 cities in 11 days.

Though Buchanan has been underestimated time and again, many Republican strategists believe he peaked in New Hampshire four years ago. A bustling field of like-minded candidates, a greater demand for money, a relatively late start and doubts about his electability work against Buchanan this time.

"I love Pat and agree with much of what he stands for, but I can't construct a scenario where he has a chance to win," said conservative leader Paul Weyrich, head of the Free Congress Foundation in Washington.

Buchanan, 60, took a leave of absence from CNN's "crossfire" to run. He told associates he is bored with the television business and believes the early Republican front-runners, Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Elizabeth Dole, are vulnerable.

Neither has formally entered the race.

Buchanan's target audience is blue-collar conservatives who share his opposition to abortion, free trade, immigration and the Washington establishment.

His tactic: galvanise voters and feed a hungry press corps, borrowing from his days as President Nixon's speechwriter to stitch together sound bites that incite and entertain.

Buchanan rallies "peasants with pitchforks," not simply voters.

Bad guys aren't just bad, they're "vandals and visigoths." And while others engage in studious ideological debates, this politician wages "cultural wars" and "religious wars," ever mounting and riding "to the sound of the guns."

Unlike his previous races, when Buchanan was the early alternative to the Republican front-runner, he will compete for the support of social conservatives against such names as former Vice President Dan Quayle, religious activist Gary Bauer, millionaire businessman Steve Forbes, New Hampshire Sen. Bob Smith and radio commentator Alan Keyes.

And while he weighed his options for 2000, Forbes, Bauer and Quayle attracted several members of the 1996 Buchanan team.

Republican consultant Eddie Mahe said Buchanan will further dilute the conservative constituency, leaving more breathing room for establishment candidates such as Bush and Dole.

Smith was the first candidate to formally enter the race.

Fellow Republican Lamar Alexander, who also ran in 1996, will declare his candidacy next week. Rep. John Kasich of Ohio and Sen. John McCain of Arizona will announce in the spring.



U.S. President Bill Clinton pauses after shopping in Dolly's Bookstore in Park City, Utah, where clerks refused to allow him to use his American Express card to pay for several books because it had expired. Clinton instead paid for his four books with cash (AFP photo)

## 'Taking mixed blood Aborigines from parents was not genocide'

DARWIN, Australia (AFP) — Forcibly removing part-Aboriginal children from their families in the 1940s and 1950s was not genocide but a way to help them escape a pitiful existence, a court was told here Tuesday.

Aborigines Lorna Cubillo, 60, and Peter Gunner, 51, are suing the Australian government in a test case in which they claim damages for lifelong emotional damage they say resulted from being taken from their parents aged seven.

The federal court has heard the two still remember the trauma of being taken to institutions where they say they were beaten and sexually abused.

Legal experts say the case could pave the way to actions by an estimated 30,000 surviving victims of a policy practised by state and federal governments for almost a century up to the late 1960s.

Counsel for the Commonwealth, Douglas Meagher, QC, rejected claims the policy was an attempt at genocide.

"The genocide allegations made against this country are extremely serious and must be refuted," he

said.

Meagher said the aim was to help Aboriginal children by having them raised with white families or in state institutions because they were often treated as outcasts in their own communities.

"Half-caste children born to young Aboriginal women brought difficulties both to mother and child," he told the court.

"Mother and child in many instances were treated as outcasts as long as the child remained in the community."

The lot of such children has from time to time been described as pitiful and indeed it was."

Meagher said most Aboriginal mothers voluntarily gave up their half-caste children to be brought up by the state.

"It's not surprising that the mothers, undoubtedly with great maternal reluctance, nevertheless thought that in the interests of the child that an institution was where the child should go."

He denied the institutions prevented the children seeing their parents.

"In all these institutions the

## Defence rests in marine pilot's manslaughter trial

CAMP LEJEUNE, North Carolina (AP) — Defence attorneys have rested their case after four days of testimony designed to show that a marine pilot flew his best before his jet severed a ski gondola cable in Italy, killing 20 people.

Closing arguments were possible late Tuesday.

Capt. Richard Ashby, 31, of Mission Viejo, California, is charged with 20 counts of involuntary manslaughter and one count each of destroying private property, destroying government property, dereliction of duty and improper flight planning.

Ashby was at the controls of the EA-6B Prowler when it hit the cable of the Mount Cermis ski gondola on Feb. 3, 1998, near

Cavalese, Italy. He faces a maximum prison sentence of 206 years if convicted of all charges.

Monday, the last defence witness narrated a computer simulation of the flight. Gen. Wang of Cambridge Research Associates said the government's three sources of data used to plot the flight didn't show the same path. Two tracks actually showed the radar-jamming jet flying through a mountain.

The conduct of the flight with what was available to the air crew was "very reasonable," said Col. Thomas Blickensderfer.

Prosecutors say Ashby was reckless and violated the mission's 517-mph (827-kph) speed limit and 600-metre altitude restriction. His jet cut a cable about 110 metres above the valley floor.

But air crash investigator Jeff

# 6 Opinion & Analysis

Jordan Times, Wednesday, March 3, 1999

## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation Established 1975

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## Instilling a human rights culture

**THE NATIONAL Task Force For Children** has just commenced a nationwide media campaign on children's rights. The theme of the campaign, which is expected to run till the first week of June, is "We Work Together for the Rights of our Children," with the goal of increasing public awareness of children's rights. Part of the campaign is to hold a regional conference in March to further bolster children's rights as spelled out in national, regional and international conventions.

Yet we know that it is one thing to talk about children's rights and quite another to do something about them. The gap between rhetoric and actions is as wide as ever when it comes to the promotion and protection of human rights across the board. Unless and until there is a clear political will to translate the rights of the child into deeds, all campaigns to highlight such rights would remain in the realm of the abstract.

So where should action begin. Of course in the home. This is where the formative years of a child are spent and this is where the respect for the human rights of the child must start. This means that parents should already have an appreciation for the culture of human rights. If the adult world lacks a human rights culture, no amount of legislation, treaties or rhetoric would be able to lend support to the national, regional and international campaigns for greater protection of children's rights.

What we are trying to say in this context, is that we cannot separate children's human rights from the human rights of adults. The two sets of rights go hand-in-hand together and completely intertwined. So as we commend the National Task Force for Children for spearheading yet another campaign to enhance children's rights, we remind ourselves that another campaign for human rights for adults needs to run concurrently in order to truly help out our young people. No nation has been able to protect its children from abuses and exploitation without first improving its human rights record in general. It is a simple fact that children are protected best in countries with a good human rights profile.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ru's Fahed Fanek said U.S. fighter planes are flying illegitimately over Iraqi territory while describing the country's reaction against such attack as "provocation." Fanek quoted President Bill Clinton as saying how sorry he felt about the strikes and how he wished that Iraq would stop its provocation and allow the UNSCOM inspectors to return. Clinton also said, according to Fanek, that the U.S. has proven that it never meant to harm Iraqi civilians. However, said Fanek, human rights organisations have revealed that last January's death toll in Iraq was "terrifying." Does Clinton believe that the Iraqi people only need food and medicine, and what does he say about banning civil aviation between Baghdad and Amman? asked the writer.

Al Dustour's Mazen Saket commented on the two-day holiday saying that it seems that the government has almost approved the issue. Saket said this system of working hours and holidays has been adopted in most developed countries in accordance with their economic and social reality as well as their capabilities. Is this holiday going to positively reflect on a Jordanian's productivity or at least preserve current levels, and how will the long working hours affect women labour? asked the writer. Saket said total refusal was the first reaction among women working in banks, so is the intention to ban them from working outside their homes or to change the nature of the Jordanian family? Taking a decision on this topic requires a comprehensive study of Jordan's social and economic reality, said Saket.

## Washington Watch

### Mideast must be forced on agenda of 2000 U.S. elections

Dr. James J. Zogby

WITHOUT ORGANISED political intervention by an Arab American-led coalition in the 2000 U.S. presidential election, there will almost certainly be no substantive discussion of U.S. Middle East policy.

The reason is not, as some might suggest, that the U.S. public has no interest in foreign affairs. And this silence is definitely not because U.S. Middle East policy is such a smashing success story. In fact, there has been a succession of largely unresolved crises in the Middle East that have consumed every U.S. administration and U.S. policy maker during the past 25 years.

During that period, the United States has sent more troops, sold more weapons, lost more lives, spent more money on foreign aid and had more vital national security interests at stake in the Middle East than in any other region of the world. And yet, despite this substantial investment, fundamental problems have not been solved and the Middle East remains a tinderbox ready to explode. But even with all of these problems and dangers, U.S. Middle East policy will not be subjected to scrutiny nor will candidates for the presidency debate these issues, unless they are forced to do so by external pressure.

The reason for this is quite simple. There has been, up until now,

an asymmetry of power in U.S. politics, so that for years pro-Israel political pressure has not only driven the policy debate but has dictated the parameters of allowable discussion.

Candidates for public office, therefore, have not evaluated Middle East policy in terms of success or failure, or protecting U.S. interests or promoting human rights. In U.S. politics, the Middle East has been a question of domestic politics. When weighing Middle East issues or policy options candidates and their advisors do not ask "will this work, or serve U.S. interests or make people's lives better?" rather they ask "will this hurt or help our campaign with money and votes?" or "will this provoke protest?" In the end, if the policy options considered will make the pressure groups happy and be ignored by the press and larger public, then it can be considered a desirable action to take irrespective of its merit with regard to the region or U.S. interests. The damage done to the region and to U.S. policy by this political behaviour has gone well beyond the denial of Palestinian rights.

Israel's supporters have attempted to shape the entire Middle East debate to force the United States view of broader Arab issues through an Israeli lens.

As a result a clear double stan-

dard has emerged in the way the United States has implemented its policy. Israel's supporters in Congress will force issues to the forefront that even undercut an administration's modest efforts to achieve some balance in their approach to the Arab World. Recently, Congress has even taken steps that have hurt the peace process. On other occasions they have taken punitive measures against a number of Arab and Islamic governments and even taken provocative jabs at U.S. Arab allies in order to embarrass them. All the while Congress continues to provide Israel extraordinary amounts of aid and benefits while shielding it from scrutiny and criticism.

While the prospects for change appear to be hopeless when looked at from the perspective of politics in Washington, there are significant changes taking place in U.S. public opinion that can be mobilised in a national election.

This could create a new dynamic that could help force a change in the Middle East debate.

If left alone, the situation will most certainly not change. Candidates will respond only to the pressure they feel and the public will not rise up spontaneously to demand a new direction in U.S. Middle East policy. If left alone, any political discussion of the Middle East by candidates will

only occur within the parameters allowed by pro-Israel forces. For example, conservative right-wingers and some "liberals" might seek to challenge the current Administration's position on Middle East issues by chiding them for not moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, not doing enough to stop terrorism or being "too soft on Arafat." In other words, what is allowable is to be more hard-line than the current U.S. policy. What is not allowable is to criticise current U.S. policy for already being too pro-Israel.

Even though public opinion polls are showing that most Americans have developed a more balanced view of Middle East issues than the current policy debate would reflect, the public does not challenge this nonsense, they tune it out.

The only way to move the debate forward is an intensive mobilisation effort to galvanise public opinion on a few crucial Middle East issues — where U.S. interests are directly at stake — to organise this opinion and to bring it into the electoral process to directly challenge the candidates and the press to be accountable for their policy decisions. In 1988 we undertook such an effort. We organised Arab Americans and other allies to run as delegates to Democratic and Republican political party conven-

tions across the United States. In ten states we had elected a sufficient number of delegates to pass resolutions at the conventions calling for "Palestinian Statehood."

In addition, in Iowa, the home of the presidential year's first contest, we organised demonstrations against presidential candidates who refused to condemn Israel's brutal crackdown on the "intifada." After a few weeks, national news reporters who had witnessed our demonstrations began to ask the candidates to comment on our demands. Before long questions regarding our concerns were being asked of the candidates during their pre-election debates. By the time we reached the National Democratic Convention, our effort, which had its home in Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign, had amassed enough strength to pass a number of platform planks on Middle East issues and to hold the first ever national debate on Palestinian rights in the heart of the Democratic convention. Such a debate is, I believe, desperately needed this year as well. The candidates and parties must be challenged, the public must be mobilised and the "deadly silence" that has stifled discussion of U.S. Middle East policy must be ended.

It can be done. But, I believe it will only be done if Arab Americans lead the way.

## Israel's elections set unique precedents

By Kenneth W. Stein

ISRAEL'S ELECTION campaign for the 15th Knesset and prime minister is like none other in Israel's history. Barring an unlikely war with the Arab World or some heinous physical violence perpetrated against Israelis, the dominant election issue will not be the Arab-Israeli peace process. The election will be a referendum on economic promises not kept, wrenching domestic and social issues, the incumbent prime minister's style, and an across the board decline in foreign relations. There are other factors.

Tones and pace for managing relations with the Arab World differ, but Likud, Labour, and centrist party leaders reflect similar basic views: the West Bank and Gaza will be shared with the Palestinians, a way needs to be found to leave southern Lebanon quickly, negotiations with Syria should be restarted, and Israel must retain security control over Jerusalem as an undivided city.

A gnawing 9 per cent unemployment rate persists: Israel's annual growth rate has slowed from 6 per cent to 2 per cent annually. A suddenly antagonistic segment of the ultra-orthodox community has openly slandered supreme court justices and challenged the legitimacy of the secular supreme court to

make judgements it believes are heavily defined. A churning anger envelops many Israelis because while their daughters and sons do obligatory army service, exemptions are easily obtained for students who are engaged in religious study. Matters of rabbinical control over civil procedure — divorce, inheritance, marriage — so long bubbling beneath the surface have erupted with unrestrained passion. Israel's diplomatic relations with Europe, many Arab and Muslim states, and with the United States has deteriorated since Bibi Netanyahu's election in May 1996.

Several months prior to Israel's last election, four bombs were exploded by Palestinian extremists. They severely hurt the election chances of Shimon Peres, the incumbent Labour Party prime minister. So far, neither the Palestinian community nor other Arab states have done or said much to influence Israeli voters. Arafat has suddenly grown speechless about declaring an independent state on May 4, 1999. He does not want to create anxiety among Israeli voters, though he may not be able to control an outbreak of violence or attacks against Israelis. In the days and months prior to the 1988, 1992, and 1996 Israeli elections, when such dreadful acts occurred, the incumbent in office was blamed.

Approximately 4.5 million

Israelis are eligible to vote in the May 17 elections. Again, as they did for the first time in the 1996 elections, Israeli voters will cast separate ballots for prime minister and for their favourite political party list. For example, it is possible for someone to vote for the Labour Party but also vote for Bibi Netanyahu as prime minister. All polls indicate that none of the major party candidates for prime minister will receive the absolute majority needed to avoid a run off. Therefore, this will likely be Israel's first election where the parliamentary election results are known before the prime minister is chosen. In essence, the campaign conducted for the scheduled May 17 Knesset election, may differ dramatically in content and tone in the run-off election for prime minister scheduled for June 1.

Any party that receives 1.5 per cent of the total vote will be represented in the parliament; in the last elections it took approximately 19,000 plus votes for a party to secure a seat in the 120-member parliament. In the 1996 elections, there were more than a dozen parties that presented party lists for the Knesset; so far more than 30 parties have registered to participate in the May 17 elections.

This is the first Israeli election in which a major party prime ministerial candidate, Yitzhak Mordechai, is of Sephardi (Iraqi) Jewish origin.

Across the political spectrum, political parties have dispatched women politicians and elevated fresh candidates to higher positions on party lists. In the run up to the 1996 elections at least three would be prime ministerial candidates, Rafael Eitan, David Levy, and Ariel Sharon withdrew their candidacies and were coopted by the Likud Party; parties have until March 30 to adjust their party lists, so additional mergers can be expected. After that, the real campaigning begins.

More than any other prime minister in Israel's history, the performance record, leadership style, and character of the sitting prime minister is a principal issue in this campaign. Netanyahu has been as scrutinised, vilified, and jostled by all shades of the Israeli media. His leadership style has significantly influenced political party formation. Former ministers are running against him: former Science Minister Beni Begin is heading his own right-wing party, former Defence and Finance Ministers Mordechai and Meridor have established their own centrist party, and former Foreign Minister Levy is poised to join the Labour Party.

Unprecedented possibilities exist because the parliament will be elected on May 17 but perhaps not the prime minister. The campaign for the Knesset is likely to be more issue oriented; if there is a run-off

for prime minister, it will be laden with nasty personal accusations. Its central theme is likely to be: Do you want four more years of Netanyahu?

In the two weeks between the Knesset election and the run-off, a particular candidate for prime minister could indicate the names of ministerial appointments in his proposed cabinet. A sophisticated Israeli electorate will do their own math and generate permutations for who will lead what ministry. With issues of religion and state increasingly acrid, the prime ministerial candidate who promises appointments that will limit or expand religious influence over daily life could sway voters. Verbal promises made to constituencies like the Russian immigrants, Israeli Arabs, or others could also make a difference in the outcome. For the first time the Israeli voter may be able to analyse and evaluate the proposed governmental teams and their promises, and then choose an appropriate political quarterback.

The writer is the William E. Schatten Professor of Contemporary Middle Eastern History and Israeli Studies at Emory University. His next book, *Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin and the Question for Arab-Israel Peace* will be published by Routledge this summer.

## Letters to the editor

### Don't expect miracles

TIME SWINGS by so fast. So fast that we can't achieve what we want for our future. People are waiting for a miracle to happen. They think that our new King has a hidden treasure to pass along to each and everyone of us that he has a magic wand to wave and change the universe into a more suitable and comfortable place for all of us to live in.

Well, wake up everyone and smell the roses. There is no treat, treasure or magic wand that His Majesty can use. We the people have the power to change our lives. If you are willing to give only then will you receive. By sitting on your backside you will achieve zilch. To speculate about the future when you are not doing anything towards making it better is a waste of your time.

The late King Hussein always referred to us as the "Jordanian family." We believed that (Jordanian family) embodied other variables that make up the family infrastructure. Some of the ideals it includes are cooperation, self-sacrifices, ethics, morals, high standards, integrity, principles and contributions from each and every member of the "Jordanian family."

In other words our new beloved King Abdullah will not be performing miracles solving our problems. We must, as any family unit, make a contribution towards our future. Then and only then will we feel that we have earned the title given to us as a "Jordanian family." A strong and united Jordan requires a strong commitment from us all.

Jane Judeh  
Amman

### A decade of peace

IN EVERY country in the world, there are children silently suffering the consequences of violence, causing enormous harm and suffering to children at every level of society.

This violence takes many forms. Between children themselves, on the street, at school, in the family and in the community. There is physical violence, psychological violence, socio-economic violence, environmental violence and political violence. Many children — too many children — live in a "culture of violence."

All human rights reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflict by tackling its root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation guaranteeing for all the full exercise of their rights and the means to participate

freely in the development of their society.

The international community with the support of more than forty countries has adopted a resolution to make the year 2000 an "International Year for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence" and the first decade of the next century (2001-2011) the "International Decade for Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World."

This is an international decade for peace and non-violence for the children of the world. It is the beginning of a new Millennium. Let's assist the efforts of the international community to foster peace, harmony, respect for human rights, democracy and development throughout the world.

Mohannad Abu Jaber  
Non-Violence Group  
Tel./Fax: 5682243  
Amman

### Legacy of a safe haven

AS WE reach the end of the millennium, we still witness in many parts of the world human rights activists striving to secure the very basic human rights of civic equality and end to racial discrimination.

In Jordan, at the dawn of the 20th century, peaceful coexistence and equality among its inhabitants of different descent was and still is manifest in an environment led by a very humane regime. This reality cannot be better supported than by those Jordanians of Armenian origin who were fortunate enough to find themselves in a country very poor in tangible resources yet a safe haven in a time when human suffering prevailed worldwide.

Under wise leadership, Armenians' civic rights were immediately safeguarded and continued to witness a life of tolerance, coexistence and diversity which was further consolidated during the reign of His Majesty King Hussein. The King who embodied these values and represented safety and secure shelter for all Jordanians of Armenian origin. This is a reality which must contribute to enhancing the human rights record of Jordan.

My late father Manuel Menthagopian, who served as Mayor of the Armenian Community in Jordan in general and the Catholic Armenian Community in particular during 1952-1998, spent his lifetime like every Jordanian citizen of Armenian origin, keeping a low profile for he opted to reciprocate the humane reception he received over the

years by both the Jordanian people and the Hashemite leadership. His belief was that a modest king like King Hussein deserves at least to be served with modesty.

King Hussein has joined his Creator the Almighty, and we are most confident that His Majesty's legacy of coexistence, tolerance, religious and racial diversity will live on under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II. May the soul of King Hussein be ever blessed by Divine Providence.

Madline Menthagopian (Nibzakobian) and family  
Jubelha

### Letter of condolence

WE WANT to express our deepest sympathies at the passing away of His Majesty King Hussein. Like you, we also feel deep sorrow at the loss of such a great leader, king, visionary and caring man of love and peace.

We hold in highest regard His Majesty's achievements in Jordan and his tremendous efforts for humanity in the region and throughout the world.

We pray for the strength of Jordan, for His Majesty King Abdullah, and for the leadership of the country. We pray that we can all forge ahead with courage and trust for the future, as King Hussein taught us through his example of love, humility and faith in God.

As King Hussein has now gone on to his heavenly reward, we pray that his influence will continue to live on in all of our hearts to help guide us in the ways of peace and love in the world.

We were very touched to see that even in his death so many people and nations were brought together. With you, to help the needy and to further the cause of peace and love in the world.

We offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers.</

## Features

Jordan Times, Wednesday, March 3, 1999 7

# China's spoilt little emperors

Twenty years ago Peking launched its one child family policy. Result: 65 million pampered only children

By Teresa Poole

I'VE HEARD that when they first go to university, some only children can't do anything, even wash their own clothes," said 20-year-old Li Yuening, an undergraduate at Tianjin city's Nankai University. "But if their parents have been educated, they won't spoil their child so much."

Her classmate, Liu Lu, 19, agreed: "In most one-child families, the parents live through the Cultural Revolution. They lost so much during that period that they want to regain it all through their child. So they sometimes spend too much money, and maybe it makes the child a little selfish."

These two young women, both only children, are the product of one of the most brutal exercises in social engineering ever seen. Two decades ago, in 1979, the Chinese Communist Party launched its controversial "one-child-family" policy. In total, China now has 65 million only children, almost all of whom live in urban areas, where the "one child policy" has meant just that.

The first only children born under this regime — such as Li and Liu — have now reached adulthood. Meanwhile, the younger generation growing up in China is characterised as pampered and spoilt "Little Emperors."

In rural areas, home to 70 per cent of Chinese, the policy since the mid-Eighties has increasingly allowed a second child, particularly if the first was a girl. But the traditional desire for sons and large families remains stubborn.

As the old saying puts it: "A married daughter is like splashed water" — i.e., a waste (female infanticide always was a problem in imperial China). Family planning rules have exacerbated this age-old preference for male offspring, assisted by ultrasound technology and selective abortion. The result is an unnaturally high proportion of baby boys, building a store of social pressures for the future.

There is much debate inside China on all these questions. It is also difficult to separate the impact of mandatory family planning from the sweep of economic and social reforms during the same 20-year period. For instance, almost any child growing up now, with or without siblings, is massively spoilt compared to youngsters before 1979.

The Chinese government claims that the population is 300 million lower

than it would have been without the one-child policy, although part of that trend would have occurred anyway with economic development. The steepest decline in the crude birth rate in fact took place before the policy was introduced, falling from 33.4 per 1,000 in 1970, to 18.25 in 1978, and 16.57 in 1997. If you look at the average number of children a woman bears, this fell from 5.8 in 1970, to about 1.9 nowadays (with the figure for urban residents below 1.3).

That still leaves more than 20 million babies born each year in China, and China's population, now 1.3 billion, is forecast to peak around 2050 at 1.6 billion. By then, the second major impact will be evident: a quarter of China's population will be over 60 years-old — hence the urgency of developing the country's nascent pensions and social insurance system.

By that time, the imbalance in the rural sex ratio may also have caused problems, as tens of millions of Chinese farmers fail to find wives. When Nature is left to herself, 106 boys are born for every 100 girl babies.

According to Chinese figures, the sex ratio for first-born babies is basically normal, but rises alarmingly with each subsequent child: 121 for second-borns, 124 for third-borns, and 131 for fourth babies, according to the 1990 census.

"For the later babies, they know they have to pay a fine," said Xie Zhenming, at the China Population Information & Research Centre, "so they don't want to leave things to chance." (This is not true in ethnic minority areas, such as Tibet, where there is no bias against girl babies.)

Xie's survey of Zhejiang province, in east China, highlighted the social reasons for the imbalance between the number of girls and boys. In the north, well-developed co-operative industries were able to provide pensions, health care, and even funeral costs to support the elderly without sons. In the south there was no such provision, agricultural work needed men, and the social pressures to continue the family line were much stronger.

While the Chinese countryside is mired in traditional prejudices, China's cities are awash with well-dressed, doted-upon only children — and no one seems sure whether this is good or bad. At Nankai University, a group of eight students, all only children from various cities, took umbrage at the general notion that their generation would exhibit problems, compared with children with

siblings. "We do not feel any obvious differences between us," said 20-year-old Ji Fei. (For this Nankai year, about half are only children.) "Some people say the only child sometimes does not know how to care about other people's feelings. All of us know how to care about others, to be tolerant, to be loving." Zhao Xiaoyu, 20, added: "Only children long for communication with others, because when they are young, they feel alone." Even the shock of the six-person dormitories, after a childhood with the luxury of their own bedrooms was bearable, they said. "We have no choice, so we must get used to it and find interest in it," said 19-year-old Nie Ting.

China's generation of urban only children do not seem to revel in their singular position. "I would have liked a brother or a sister, it would have been interesting," said Sijing Gaowa, 20, at Nankai. "I want to have a brother, because if he is older he can protect me, and if younger I will not feel lonely. And when I go to college, my younger brother would stay with my parents," said Nie.

These young adults were raised before China's 1990s boom, so their parents had less opportunity to lavish them with material goods. On the train back to Peking, I met four Chinese boys on a school trip, all only children aged between 11 and 13, from the north-east city of Jinzhou. Did they ever feel they were spoilt? "Yes," they chorused, gleefully. "Whatever is good to eat, my mother gets for me," said 12-year-old Zhang Xi, who was at least two stone overweight. Here, perhaps, were some of China's famed "Little Emperors," whose parents had just spent about two weeks' average wages sending their precious ones on a four-day educational visit to Tianjin and Peking.

China's government is well aware of the potential social pitfalls of its family planning policy, but also points to some obvious advantages of being an only child. Fu Zongbi, a family education expert at the Women's Federation, said: "The family is better off and they can devote more resources to only child. The only child has a wider range of knowledge and a higher level of intelligence. The parents have enough time and energy to spend on education for the kids." Since the early 1980s, China has run parenting classes for adults, with emphasis in the cities on how not to spoil only children, but also on not overloading them with pressure to perform.



A young Chinese girl gets the royal treatment as she and another child are trotted around a Beijing park in a sheep-drawn buggy. Since China adopted its one-child policy some two decades ago, Chinese parents have pampered their single children with so much affection and indulgence that a new breed of spoiled and overweight children, called the new 'little emperors,' has parents spending all their time and money to keep them happy (AFP photo)

Plenty of other, bigger, surveys point to a more complicated picture. Materially-speaking, spending on children is certainly huge, accounting for up to one-third of total family income in the big cities.

A study of middle-school students in Hubei province found that at kindergarten and primary school, only children were mentally and physically superior to those with siblings, but that their behaviour was worse. However, by middle school, those differences in character had disappeared.

On psychological ratings, against expectations, loneliness was more of a problem among those with siblings.

Part of the reason may be that Chinese urban children often attend full-time kindergarten from as young as three years old. Older urban children are also routinely sent to summer camps or quasi-military training. Luo Xubin, at the Young Pioneer Centre's Department of Social Activity, said:

"Last summer, we organised 300 or 400 children from Peking to go to a military base in Hebei province. That was kind of hardship camp. At the base, the children learned to take care of their daily life, the dormitory, bad military training, held bonfire parties, and fished in the streams. It lasted five days. Getting out of the family, the children could use their own initiative."

The more worrying social problem probably comes from the huge pressure which parents these days put on their only children. Fu quoted a survey in counties and towns in Jiangsu province which found that one-third of five-year-olds were already learning musical instruments, something which Chinese parents believe will increase their child's intelligence. In Peking, at the China Children's Centre, which is run by the Women's Federation, expensive piano lessons are on offer. "We have several hundred

students learning the piano," said one staff member. "If the parents keep coming with the child, then the child continues to learn... However, more than half drop out after one or two years."

A little-known fact is that, under China's family planning rules, these only children, if they marry another only child, will be permitted to have two children.

Cong Jun, a senior official at the State Family Planning Commission, whose only child is now 21, said: "We find that when our people are better educated, they tend not to have children at all. It's a change of attitude to marriage and child-bearing. The young people in the cities now, a lot of them do not want to have any children. 'But I can tell you, I really want to have two grandchildren!'"

— The Guardian

## Japanese fund trips to sex shops

By Sachiko Kinosita  
*Agence France Presse*

A JAPANESE scheme to rescue the economy with a multi-billion-dollar shopping voucher give-away is inadvertently funding free trips to sex shops, industry members said Monday.

The unintended side-effect of the government scheme has been welcomed by some sex industry workers. But at least one local authority has now banned use of the coupons in red-light districts.

Shops authorised to accept the coupon display a special "approved by the city office" sticker issued by the local authority.

"Yes, we've got it (the sticker)," said the manager of Marine Boy, a gay sex shop in the racy Tokyo district of Shinjuku.

"I don't expect to get good sales from it. I just want the publicity because I heard that several other sex shops had applied for it. I thought why not?" he added.

At a nearby sex massage parlour, the assistant manager said on condition of anonymity: "We applied for it and we got a sticker from Shinjuku ward. We will accept the coupon from today."

This wasn't quite the result expected when the novel scheme to stimulate stagnant domestic demand was launched this year, giving coupons worth a total 20,000 yen (\$173) for each eligible person.

The coupons, each worth 1,000 yen, are issued by local governments with their own designs — some with cartoonish and others more formal — under a government scheme worth a total 770 bil-

lion yen.

They go to households with children aged 15 or younger and to bed-ridden and low-income people aged 65 or older — a total of about 35 million people — and must be spent in the local area within six months.

An official of the Shinjuku ward authority said stickers authorising use of the shopping coupons had been sent to 7,000-to-8,000 shops.

"Basically we gave each shop (that applied) a sticker. We don't know how many sex shops applied ... but I am sure there are some. We don't discriminate if an applicant owns a sex service shop."

Likewise in Tokyo's Toshima ward, a local government official said the authorising stickers had been issued to 5,700 shops for its coupons, which are to be distributed March 10.

"I'm sure it must include some sex shops," he said.

But the authorities of western Tokyo's Taitou-Ku ward have clamped down on the sex industry, barring the use of coupons in its historic red-light district of Yoshiwara.

"The coupons are supposed to lighten the economic burden for residents. Sex shops and the sex industry are not suitable places to use them," said a Taitou official.

Analysts have derided the shopping coupon scheme as a desperate attempt to save the economy, saying people will simply use the vouchers and save the cash they would otherwise have spent.

## Legendary swindler inspires chaotic Russia

By Adam Tanner  
*Reuters*

SEVENTY YEARS after he first made his mark as a fast-thinking swindler, Ostap Bender is alive and well, the heart of a long series of dubious deals and outright theft that have flourished in post-Soviet Russia.

When millions of Russians lost their money in pyramid schemes in the early 1990s, Ostap was there. When the government defaulted on its bonds last year, Ostap laughed at how easily investors were fooled. When the West saw much of its food aid stolen in 1992-93, Ostap marvelled at how simple it was.

The exploits of the dashig and touchingly naive con-artist, who travelled through far-flung Russian towns and villages artfully ripping off the locals, made the 1927 novel "The Twelve Chairs" one of Russia's best-loved books.

Yet these days he has become more than just a character from fiction.

To many Russians, the spirit of Ostap Bender is the driving force behind the country's "Wild West" capitalism.

The book by satirists Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov, in which Ostap searches for diamonds stashed inside one of a set of 12 missing chairs, serves as a sort of guide-book to Russia today.

Ostap Bender is kind of a symbol of this anarchy and will to survive," Boris Fyodorov, a former deputy prime minister and chief tax collector, told Reuters.

Fyodorov estimated that all but one percent of Russians, following Ostap's tradition, try to skirt the rules.

In the novel, Ostap burns down the chairs one by one using a mixture of charm and deceit. His ultimate goal is to get enough money to go to Brazil — although he never makes it that far.

The book is set during the period of the new economic policy (NEP) in the 1920s, a brief and rambunctious experiment with capitalist policies that followed the Bolshevik revolution.

"It's basically about an adventure in a free country, and that's why it was so popular during the Soviet times," said Fyodorov, whose 1998 efforts to boost tax collection fell victim to well-respected traditions of deceiving the government.

The post-Soviet privatisation of public assets provided similar opportunities to follow Ostap's adage of "respecting the criminal code" while exploiting loopholes and human weaknesses for self-gain.

"We can see this character especially in the period of turmoil and upheaval when there are more opportunities to express yourself," said book publisher Igor Zakharov.

Grigory Yavlinsky, a candidate for president in the 2000 election and head of the liberal Yabloko Party, said the vast web of lingering Soviet ways made Ostap-style cons easy.

"The book of Ilf and Petrov is about the absurdity of the previous system, and the previous system is still in place," he said in an interview. "While the Soviet system is in place, Ostap Bender is still in place." The government's major effort to undo the Soviet system — privatisation — mobilised a new army of Ostaps as well-connected insiders snapped up state assets at often ridiculously low prices. A new class of Russian "oligarcs" was born.

Ordinary Russians, meanwhile, received privatisation vouchers which privatisation mastermind Anatoly Chubais promised would be worth as much as a car. Some swapped them for a bottle of vodka. Others put them in big-lining investment funds which collapsed, leaving them without enough to buy even a new car.

The widespread corruption and shady deals that rose in the era of privatisation have prompted some sociologists to describe Russia as a kleptocracy, or 'government of thieves'

there won't be anything of the kind," Deputy Atomic Energy Minister Bulat Nigmatulin told a recent news conference.

"Imagine that you had \$1 million. Would you really bring them here with the risk of losing them?" Yet the West did invest, lend — and has yet to recover — tens of billions of dollars in Russia in the 1990s.

Yavlinsky credited Chubais, who in 1998 was Russia's chief loan negotiator, with Ostap talents in winning billions in International Monetary Fund loans last summer.

"Maybe Ostap Bender is a good example to explain the relations between Chubais and the IMF," he said.

"Billions of dollars in loans had melted away by last August when the government defaulted on its GKO treasury bills and devalued the rouble. Much of the banking system became insolvent, parting millions of Russians from their funds.

"It was the government that was playing

the game of Ostap Bender and not the banks," said Vyacheslav Nikonorov, head of the Politika Fund, a think tank. "The reaction was 'what could you expect from the government or the banks?'" Much as the government with its high-yielding T-Bills, Ostap also promises easy wealth to the citizens of Noviye Vasyuki.

Posing as a chess grandmaster, he said he would organise an "inter-planetary chess congress" in their backwater town.

When he is unmasked — Ostap can barely play chess — he ridicules the locals for their naive trust; a humiliation 1998 depositors felt when their banks froze their accounts.

"Fools," Ostap told an angry crowd as he escaped. "I don't think that a chess grandmaster would visit such idiots as you." Showing that Ostap has penetrated the minds of the highest ranks in the government, Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov recalled the chess scene in televised comments this month while calling for an orderly parliamentary election later this year.

"During the election campaign let's move the pieces on the chessboard. It would be worse if you stand up and, like Ostap Bender perhaps, throw the chessboard at the head of your opponent sitting opposite you," he said.

Such brazenness, combined with a considerable capacity to charm, has made Ostap a beloved figure, especially those who came of age during the Soviet era.

One fan is Kiran Ilyumzhinov, governor of the tiny southern region of Kalmykia and head of the International Chess Federation, who has set up an entire region called "City Chess" with a complex for chess tournaments. Ilyumzhinov proudly nicknamed it Noviye Vasyuki. Kalmykia's main city even has an Ostap Bender boulevard and a monument to the swindler.

Actor Archil Gomashvili, who played Ostap in a classic Soviet-era film of "The 12 Chairs," said it is unfair to tar Ostap's name with the audacious crimes of today's Russia.

"If Ostap Bender saw what is happening in Russia, he would not go out on the street, he would be so afraid," he said in an interview in his "Golden Ostap" restaurant in Moscow. "Ostap Bender would never have thought of such things."

"He would not leave people without a crust of bread as the government has today."

## Islamic summit calls for state controls to ensure effective functioning of market economy

DHAKA (AFP) — Leaders of eight mainly Islamic developing nations Tuesday ended two-day summit here with calls for state controls to guard against free-market excesses.

But the "Dhaka Declaration" issued by Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey warned against reversing the trend of increasing globalisation.

"For the effective functioning of the market economy, governments must play a positive role in the development and management of international finan-

cial institutions, systems and infrastructure," it said.

The 33-point statement also voiced concern over the alleged lack of responses by international institutions "to implement the many proposals" made in the wake of the global financial crisis.

It added that there was "a compelling need for reforms to guard against possible recurrence of such crises as well as new threats of instability and protectionism..."

"While we acknowledged the benefits of globalisation, it is important to recognise its accompany-

ing risks of destabilisation and increased inequality between developed and developing countries ... and within countries."

The declaration was issued by leaders and officials of the "Developing Eight" (D-8) nations including Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, prime ministers Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, Mahathir Mohammed of Malaysia and Sheikh Hasina Wajed of Bangladesh, and Iranian Vice President Hassan Habibie.

The leaders earlier Tuesday held informal talks during a river cruise near

the bustling Bangladeshi capital. The "Dhaka Declaration" was issued after they returned to Dhaka.

The D-8 was founded in 1997 in Istanbul to boost economic ties among its largely Muslim member countries. The Dhaka summit was due in November but was put off due to floods which ravaged Bangladesh.

The "Dhaka Declaration" also called for cooperation within member countries in such fields as agriculture,

aquaculture, environment as well as energy.

It appeared to echo some of the known views of Mahathir, who along with his Pakistani counterpart warned during the opening session on Monday against unchecked globalisation.

The next D-8 summit is to be held in Egypt in 2001.

## World Bank: Social cost of crisis will outlast return to growth

BANGKOK (AFP) — A modest return to growth forecast for some of Asia's pulverised economies will have little immediate impact on the crushing social problems inflicted by the financial crisis, the World Bank says.

As the currency volatility of 1997 in Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia blossomed into a full-blown economic crisis it triggered a devastating wave of social ills.

Rising unemployment meant a sharp drop in standards of living for many people and hit health care, education and social services, according to a recent report by the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB).

That suffering will not simply evaporate when hammered economies struggle back to their feet, World Bank Vice-President Jean-Michel Severino told AFP.

"There is a lag between the moment at which growth starts to resume and the moment at which it starts to show in the real lives of people," he said.

"Especially as even with additional growth in the coming months and next year, we'll see the impact of the layoffs created by the unavoidable restructuring of the corporate sector," said Severino in Bangkok after a World Bank conference on the social impact of the crisis.

"This is something that the economies of Asia have to go through and it is virtually impossible to

get around that," he said. "So we expect that the coming months, even if we see growth again, it will still be difficult."

South Korea said that gross domestic product (GDP) was expected to grow two per cent this year. Thailand's latest agreement with the IMF predicts growth will return in the second quarter of 1998.

And Indonesia, where the economy crashed 13.68 per cent in the last year according to official figures, says GDP growth may grow 1.5 per cent in 1999, even though some private think-tanks have disputed the figure.

But an improvement in social conditions will take time, as all three nations have suffered from all or some of a devastating combination of mass layoffs, rising wages, falling standards of living and a chafing of social cohesion.

Twenty million dollars of a \$47 million World Bank trust fund set up to alleviate the worst social costs of the crisis have already been invested in 36 projects around the region.

But Severino said that despite progress the recovery is fragile and internal shocks could throw it off course.

Solving social problems is not simply a humanitarian necessity but vital for sustainable growth, he said.

"It is very clear that if the social situation continues to worsen it may reach a point at which social unrest might rise and social unrest might itself jeopardise the recovery."

As jobs are lost, the ADB says, people are

unable to meet the costs of health care which simultaneously increase due to rising inflation.

At the same time, as governments are forced to submit to the straightjackets of International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailouts, public spending on health and education drops, shutting more people out of the safety net.

Increasing deprivation in turn, leads to rising crime, a temptation to trade drugs and rising domestic violence, the ADB said in a report on the Social Impact of Asia's crisis released in November.

While the IMF has addressed structural weaknesses, the World Bank and other agencies have tackled social destruction.

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D-8 members represent 13.5 per cent of the world's population but only four per cent of global trade despite possessing rich resources, including 12 per cent of global oil reserves and 21 per cent of gas reserves.

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aquaculture, environment as well as energy.

It appeared to echo some of the known views of Mahathir, who along with his Pakistani counterpart warned during the opening session on Monday against unchecked globalisation.

The next D-8 summit is to be held in Egypt in 2001.

## A.F.M TRADE Tuesday, 02-03-99

ACCESS 4646868

COMPANY	Open Price	Close Price	Change
<b>BANKS</b>			

ARAB BK	221.000	223.000	+ 0.90%
JOR NATIONAL BK	1.490	1.470	- 1.34%
BR OF JOR	1.320	1.320	0.00%
INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK	1.490	1.470	- 1.34%
THE HOUSING BK	2.640	2.780	- 2.11%
JOR KUWAIT BK	1.660	1.630	- 1.81%
JOR ISLAMIC BK	1.660	1.700	+ 1.90%
JOR INV. & FIN. BK	1.330	1.330	0.00%
PHILADELPHIA BK	0.530	0.530	0.00%

BANKS INDEX	289.200	POINT =	+ 0.41%
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<b>INSURANCE</b>			
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JOR FRENCH INSU	2.680	2.650	- 1.12%
ARAB LIFE &ACCIDENT I	1.950	1.900	+ 2.70%

INSURANCE INDEX	125.480	POINT =	+ 0.15%
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<b>SERVICES</b>			
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ELECTRIC POWER	1.650	1.630	+ 1.82%
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO S	0.920	0.900	- 2.17%
AL-ZAYAT	7.000	7.000	0.00%
COMMODORE HOTELS	1.050	1.100	+ 4.76%
AL-ZAYAT FOR EDUC. IN	0.900	0.910	+ 1.11%
UNITED CO. FOR ORG. L	1.150	1.140	- 0.87%
UNITED FOR FINANCIAL I	1.100	1.100	0.00%

SERVICES INDEX	114.040	POINT =	+ 0.42%
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<b>INDUSTRY</b>			
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CEMENT	3.650	3.750	+ 2.74%
PHOSPHATE MINES	2.520	2.530	+ 0.43%
ARAB POTASH	4.000	4.000	0.00%
JOR PETROLEUM REFIN	10.800	10.800	0.00%
THE INDU. COMBIS. AGRI	1.050	1.030	- 1.90%
AKAR PHARMACEUTICAL	3.050	3.030	- 0.65%
JOR CERAMIC INDUS	1.200	1.270	- 0.78%
JOR DAIRY	2.950	2.950	0.00%
INT'L. TOBACCO & CIGA	1.530	1.520	- 0.65%
ARAB CHEMICAL DETER	7.350	7.060	- 4.08%
DAR AL DAWA	6.110	6.160	+ 0.65%
MIDDLE EAST COMPLEX	0.560	0.560	0.00%
JOR STEEL	0.980	1.010	+ 3.06%
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	0.420	0.410	- 2.38%
NATIONAL INDUS	0.350	0.350	0.00%
PETRO - CHEMICAL INDU	0.290	0.290	0.00%
CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE	1.150	1.130	- 1.74%
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE	0.500	0.480	- 4.00%
JOR SULPHO - CHEMICAL	0.410	0.410	0.00%
ARAB CENTER FOR PHAR	1.280	1.300	+ 1.56%
KATHWEE INVEST	0.360	0.340	- 5.56%
EL-ZAYAT	1.280	1.270	- 0.78%
UNIVERSAL MODERN IND	0.590	0.590	0.00%
NATIONAL ALUMINUM IN	0.800	0.790	- 1.25%

INDUSTRY INDEX	95.400	POINT =	+ 0.63%
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<b>PARALLEL</b>			
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EXPORT BK 757	0.950	0.940	- 1.05%
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# Business & Finance

Jordan Times, Wednesday, March 3, 1999 9



A review of news from the Arabic Press

## Study finds expatriates owning 16 per cent of empty housing units

**\*\*A STUDY** conducted by the society of investors in the housing sector shows that the private sector contributes only 7.7 per cent of the housing, which is less than 100 square metres in area, for low-income groups. The study was conducted on 7,000 housing units between 1994 and 1997 through 55 investors and companies and covered all areas within the Amman Governorate as well as the governorates of Irbid, Zarqa and Ajaba.

The low contribution was attributed mainly to high land prices which increases the prices of the housing units and to the absence of infrastructure services at the areas where the land prices were low. The present building law was mentioned as another reason for the low share of private sector involvement in housing for low-income groups. "The section related to organising construction does not help to lower housing costs despite regulations issued by the Higher Organising Council regarding cooperative and investment housing projects," the study said. It added that the Municipality of Greater Amman did not yet authorise the execution of the regulations which aim at providing more housing units to low-income groups at low cost.

According to the study, the low-income category could not meet the conditions of financing from banks and specialised financial institutions as well as housing funds. As such, "it is imperative that the government take the appropriate measures to provide this category with an alternative especially after the cancellation of the Housing Bank law," the society said.

The study revealed that 55.6 per cent of

those who work in the private sector resort to pay 9.77 per cent of the cost of a housing unit in instalments over a period ranging between one and three years. 85 per cent for one year, 10 per cent for two years and five per cent for three years, the study showed.

Noting that the private sector concentrates on construction for high- and middle-income groups, the study pointed out that the private sector's average annual sales amounted to 98.7 per cent of the overall output during the four-year period covered by the study. "This means that the market needs such units as the rate of units constructed but not sold, at 1.3 per cent, is small," the society explained.

It found that 16 per cent of the sold units that were empty were owned by Jordanians working abroad. "This means that Jordanian expatriates represent a somehow good percentage of those home-owners each year," the study said highlighting the positive effects of foreign currency revenue to the treasury and the activity in the construction sector. The rate of empty housing units on offer for rent was 5.11 per cent.

The society stressed the importance of reconsidering the Cabinet decision of May 1998 which subjected the income of investors in the housing sector to the income tax in order to encourage them to build good quality housing units at low cost. The society also sought the cancellation of the Onoman profit-sharing system and a reconsideration of the "deposit fees" required by the Water Authority.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) The more careful you are, the fewer jobs you'll have to do over. Neatness counts, and appearances matter almost more than what's behind the props. Life is a stage, so put on your best performance. What you can't win by force, you might gain with your dazzling smile.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Nobody would deny that you're a practical, hard-working person, but you do like your luxuries. Today, that's your problem. You could get distracted by something you find overwhelmingly appealing, and make yourself late for an appointment. If you don't want to get yourself yelled at, try not to let that happen.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) If there are still changes you want to make, go ahead and push for them now. Your problem is that you're too popular. You'll have to choose tonight between a meeting with friends and a date with somebody you love. Both will work better tomorrow if you can reschedule them.

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) You can expect snags today, so watch out for them. If you can't be two places at once, you'll have to speed things up. You can do amazing things when you have to. You may also have to explain to a loved one that work takes priority now. Sorry, but that's what's most likely to pay the bills.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 22) Your fortunes have been bouncing up and down for the past few days, but don't despair. You're entering an intense learning phase.

Don't let that news scare you, either, but be patient. You may not find the answer you're seeking until tomorrow.

**VIRGO:** (August 23 to September 22) Pay attention to the various comings and goings today, especially if money is involved. That's how you'll find out what's really happening. All is not as it appears to be. On the surface, it may look like there's too much, when actually there's not enough. Hold on to what you've got.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) You're getting luckier and better looking. Unfortunately, you're not really getting noticeably more decisive. Just the opposite may be true. No need to worry. Others are glad to look out for your interests. Make sure you choose one you find interesting, too.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) The secret to your success today is relationships. Somebody owes you a favour, and vice versa. You won't have to pay for what you want, if you can trade. You're great back-scratcher, and pretty good at figuring out what other people need. If you can find it and provide it, you're in business!

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Push a little harder, to get over the top. Meetings may tie up your business and even private time. You'd rather be relaxing with friends, but that may have to wait. You'll be too busy juggling for a while. You're looking good, though. Hang in there.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You should have pretty well figured out where you're going by now, and that's good. The action's going to get fast and furious. Hopefully you've done the homework already, because there won't be time for that now. Trust your intuition about money, and your experience about love.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 20 to February 18) All sorts of new information is coming in, and you're gathering it up as fast as you can. It's important, too, because you need to learn quickly in order to stay ahead of the competition. You have an incredible advantage right now, so don't waste a moment of it.

**PISCES:** (February 19 to March 20) Try to avoid getting into an argument today. Looks like it'll be more expensive than you even dreamed possible. That might mean you have to go along with someone you disagree with, at least temporarily. Save your energy for a fight you can win.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

## GEC buys U.S. Reltec for \$2.1b

**LONDON (AFP)** — The General Electric Company (GEC), the rump telecoms group split from GEC's former Marconi defence electronics arm, Monday took its first post-break-up step by purchasing the U.S. Reltec Corporation for \$2.1 billion.

In January, British Aerospace armaments and aircraft manufacturer bought GEC-Marconi for 7.7 billion pounds (£11 billion euros, \$12.8 billion).

The deal left GEC as a telecoms and consumer goods company in possession of a fat cash pile.

The company said that it paid a premium of 36 per cent for Reltec, which designs, manufactures and sells telecommunication products to a string of leading U.S. telecoms groups.

The agreed bid was for \$29.50 per share in Reltec. GEC has inherited with its purchase debts of \$361 million. Reltec's turnover last year was more than \$1 billion, with net income of \$50.4 million.

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ed that two million visitors in the year 2,000, with a four-day average stay, will translate in a 60 per cent occupancy rate for Jordan's total of 211 hotels by next fall.

Hoteliers give a thumbs up to the job done by the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB), which has decided to concentrate this year's promotional efforts mainly on the U.S., France, Germany, and Italy, but they complain that funds allocated to marketing are not enough.

"The funds are being controlled by the JTB professionally, but the money is not enough to bring the additional arrivals we need," Nazzal says. The current 35 per cent occupancy rate has been estimated at 35 per cent, with lows as disappointing as 11 per cent in some five-star hotels at main tourist attractions, such as Petra and Aqaba.

"All over the world, hotels are a long term-business."

It will compete in world markets with magnesium products from Italy, Israel, Ireland, the Netherlands, Mexico and Australia.

The Arab Potash Company over the last few years has been actively trying to diversify its production, which has traditionally been restricted to raw potash. It has created a handful of downstream industries through JODICO to exploit the Dead Sea's resources. Last October, JODICO signed a \$120 million deal with the American Abbermarle for the construction of a bromine factory also at the Dead Sea. Other ventures under the JODICO-APC wing are the Jordan Safi Salt Company, a producer of industrial and table salts, and Al Numeira, which extracts mud and salt from the Dead Sea for use in the cosmetics industry.

"This project builds on our long-term commitment to this important region and underlines AGRA's growing position as an international leader in professional services for process industries."

The JORMAG project will be AGRA's second in the Kingdom: in 1995, the company helped build the Alnejma Bulk Pharmaceutical Plant.

AGRA... Monenco President and CEO Alex Taylor said in a statement released to the press that his company was "very pleased to be involved in this important industrial development project for Jordan."

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The JORMAG project will be AGRA's second in the Kingdom: in 1995, the company helped build the Alnejma Bulk Pharmaceutical Plant.

## Number of tourists needed exceeds government's rosy expectations

# Political developments haunt Jordanian hoteliers

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — The spectre of yet another regional crisis dangles on otherwise optimistic prospects for tourism growth at the turn of the Millennium. Jordanian hoteliers say.

While the Ministry of Tourism expects around two million tourists to visit the Kingdom by the end of the year 2,000 — almost a 100 per cent increase over last year's 1.25 million — the private sector is quick to remind officials of how sensitive the industry is to political developments.

"Reservation charts can change overnight," says Michael Nazzal, president of the Jordan Hotel Association (JHA).

"Now, for example, we have high hopes on a big influx of visitors from the Gulf this sum-

mer. But who can tell what will happen after the [May 17] Israeli elections?"

A tourism ministry report announced earlier this week that 82 new hotels will open by end of this year — a 50 per cent growth which has accumulated since the signing of the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

"It is not a sudden growth, but a significant one, which in turn will require a stronger marketing effort by the government," Nazzal said in an interview with the Jordan Times on Tuesday.

"A general marketing strategy has to be implemented, not simply because it is the year 2,000, but because we have these rooms to fill and we need to boost our tourism, whether religious, medical, or recreational."

destination, or fears that the many brand-new hotels that are about to open will remain empty could become a reality.

The total of rooms will grow this year, from 11,500 last year to 18,000 by end of this year — a 50 per cent growth which has accumulated since the signing of the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

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## IOC investigator hopes to publish findings by end of week

SYDNEY (AFP) — The fate of at least 13 IOC members under investigation in the Salt Lake City scandal should be known by the end of the week, the International Olympic Committee's chief investigator said Monday.

However, Dick Pound, a Canadian lawyer and IOC executive board member who chairs the six-man inquiry panel into the alleged misconduct, said any formal decision on whether to expel members guilty of alleged wrongdoing might have to wait until the full IOC session in June.

Pound hoped to publish his report by the end of the week.

"We'd like to have our position in respect of each of the members made clear and public by then," he said in a telephone conference call with media organisations late Monday from Lausanne, Switzerland.

"Recommendations still have to be made. We have talked about these and are trying to reach a consensus."

"We're going to spend much of the next two

days on this on a pretty concentrated basis."

His report will go to the executive board to frame proposals to put before a special general assembly on March 17-18.

The commission has been considering the cases of 13 members, including three who remained under investigation when the initial part of the inquiry concluded in January when nine members were expelled or resigned.

Pound said another "six or seven" members had been implicated in fresh reports from Salt Lake City where 2002 winter games organisers have admitted they spent \$1.2 million in cash payments, scholarships, free medical care and other inducements.

Three members — Phil Coles of Australia, Ashwini Kumar of India and Augustin Arroyo of Ecuador — testified before the Pound Commission in Lausanne.

Coles, a director of the Sydney Organising Committee for the 2000 Olympics, was linked to \$45,000 worth of lavish travel and holidays in the

### United States.

"I've always felt confident, I've been within the guidelines," he said before flying out of Switzerland.

"It was a fair discussion I briefed them thoroughly," he later told an Australian radio station.

Pound said generally speaking, the allegations concerning the additional 10 members were not as serious as the cases made public in January.

"On the new 10, they are not of such an obviously serious nature as the ones we saw in the first slice that we did in late January," Pound said.

"But there are certainly some aspects of their conduct that need explanation and consideration by us and that's what we're in the process of sorting out."

Pound said it was helpful the three members chose to come to Lausanne for meetings he described as "cordial".



## Tennis great Bill Talbert dies at 80

NEW YORK (AP) — Bill Talbert, a star player who later became tournament director of the U.S. Open, is dead at age 80.

A 1967 enshrinee of the international tennis hall of fame in Newport, R.I., Talbert died Sunday in his Manhattan home. Cause of death was not immediately known, but he had been confined to a wheelchair for the last several years.

William F. Talbert, born in Cincinnati on Sept. 4, 1918, was diagnosed at age 10 with diabetes. He was recognised as the first diabetic to compete in athletics at the highest international level.

He reached the singles finals at the U.S. Championships — later known as the U.S. Open — in 1944 and 1945 and the U.S. Indoor Championships in 1948-51. He was ranked among the top 10 in the United States from 1941 through 1955, and was a stalwart of the American Davis Cup team.

As a player, he starred in doubles,

teaming with Gardner Mulloy to reach the U.S. doubles final six times, winning in 1942, '45, '46 and '48. He also captured the U.S. Championship mixed doubles with Margaret Osborne four straight years — 1943-46.

Talbert teamed with Tony Trabert, another hall of famer, to win both the French and Italian doubles titles in 1950, and was U.S. Davis Cup captain from 1953-57, defeating Australia to win the Cup in 1954.

Known as "Mr. Tennis," Talbert was named director of the U.S. Open championships at Forest Hills and served as chairman and director of the Open from 1971-75. When the Grand Slam tournament moved to Flushing Meadows, Talbert returned as director from 1978-87 and served as honorary vice chairman until his death.

Having played in both the longest men's doubles match and mixed doubles match on record, Talbert was instrumental in introducing the tiebreaker in a major tournament in

1970.

He was chairman emeritus of the hall of fame, served on the Hall of Fame's executive committee and was tournament chairman of the Hall of Fame Tennis Championships in Newport.

He was a member of the national diabetes advisory board, the president's advisory council of the American Diabetes Association and a director of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

Last year, Talbert marked 50 years of service with the U.S. Banknote Corporation in New York, where he was a vice president from 1953 until his death.

He also co-authored eight books, including the acclaimed "the game of doubles in tennis," and his autobiography, "playing for life." Talbert was married to the former Nancy Pike, an editor for Vogue and Life magazine, from 1946 until her death in 1995. He is survived by two sons, w. Pike and Peter, and two grandchildren.

## Anelka poised to sign for Atletico

MADRID (AFP) — French striker Nicolas Anelka is poised to join Spanish First Division side Atletico Madrid next season, the Spanish daily newspaper AS reported Tuesday.

The newspaper claims that the 19-year-old footballer has already had talks with the Spanish club's directors but that the \$24 million transfer fee being asked for the French teenager was delaying the process.

Atletico have been looking for a striker following the departure of Christian Vieri for Italian Serie A side Lazio and injured Francisco Narvaez "Kiko", out of action until the end of the season.

Anelka has told the French media he is lonely in London, where he has four years left on his contract.

But Arsenal's top scorer is staying put according to Arsenal manager, Arsene Wenger, who said he wouldn't swap him for any player in the world, including Ronaldo.

Last week Wenger insisted no offers had been made for Anelka. His comments came days after the French teenager was linked with multi-million pound moves to Barcelona and Juventus.

Anelka helped the gunners to the double last season but his two Wembley goals for France against England have sent his profile soaring.

Wenger said: "No club has come in for him. We want to keep our players."

"It just shows how quickly things change. One year ago nobody knew him and suddenly everybody wants to know him."

"In between, he has extended his contract with us and these things are all rumours. When you have a big player, it makes all the agents and newspapers nervous. The right thing for his career is to stay with Arsenal."

Former Italy boss Arrigo Sacchi was sacked by Atletico last month after a run of poor results.

## Two-time U.S. Open champion advances in Scottsdale

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (AP) — Patrick Rafter started fast and hung on. Goran Ivanisevic didn't get rolling until midway through his match.

By different routes, both reached the second round of the Franklin Templeton Tennis Classic.

Rafter beat qualifier Alex O'Brien 6-3, 6-3 Monday night, and Ivanisevic followed with a 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 win over Scott Draper of Australia.

Two more wins for each, and they would meet in the semifinals, with a possible title match with Pete Sampras in the offing.

Ivanisevic held serve the rest of the way and broke the other left-hander four times, three in the short final set.

"I believed I was hitting the ball OK, so I just had to wait until things started working," Ivanisevic said.

No. 7 Thomas Muster of Austria and No. 8 Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil, the two former French Open champions in the strongest Scottsdale field ever, were upset.

Justin Gimelstob defeated muster 6-4, 7-5, and Jerome Golmard of France ousted Kuerten 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Gimelstob went into the match ranked 68th in the world, the highest of his career, to Muster's 22nd. But he won 77 per cent of his service points while defeating Muster in their first meeting.

"Having grown up seeing him win the French open (in 1995) and knowing that he was No. 1 in the world at one time, it's a great feeling," Gimelstob said.

In another surprise, Spaniard Fernando Vicente defeated unseeded Jason Stoltenberg of Australia 7-6 (7-3), 7-5.

Stoltenberg, ranked 27th to Vicente's 62nd, reached the Scottsdale final last year before losing to Andre Agassi.

Mariano Zubateta of Argentina beat Czech Slava Dosedel 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, and Jan-Michael Gambill beat Franco Squillari of Argentina 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 for the right to play the winner of the Sampras-Delgado match.



Goran Ivanisevic

## Venables rules out return as England coach

LONDON (AP) — Former England soccer manager Terry Venables on Tuesday ruled out a return to the position he left in 1996, even if he is still a candidate when Kevin Keegan's part-time, four-match stint as national coach is over.

Venables was touted as a firm contender for the job when Glenn Hoddle was fired by the Football Association last month following his controversial comments about disabled people.

But Venables, who managed England from 1994 to 1996, says he is no longer interested in the job.

"It's too late now," he was quoted as saying in Tuesday's Daily Mail newspaper. "If I was going to be the next manager it would have happened by now."

"I think the FA would have let Keegan have anything to take the job — just as long as it wasn't me," he added. "Now I have my own plans. Of course it's disappointing but that's the way it is." Venables, who coached Australia's soccer team in a failed bid to reach the France '98 World Cup finals and then returned briefly to league management at Crystal Palace, said he didn't expect Keegan to extend his commitment as national boss beyond England's next four games.

"Kevin's got too good a thing going at Fulham to want to leave and I can't really see him changing his mind," he said.

"Ultimately, I think he will go and I've no idea who will take over. But I wouldn't want to see a foreign coach in charge of an England side."

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### China prepares for qualifiers

SHANGHAI (AP) — The Chinese Olympic football team has kicked off a two-week training session here aimed at sharpening their form ahead of qualifiers to start in May, the official Xinhua news agency reported Tuesday. Headed by British coach Bobby Houghton, the side hopes to compete in the games for the first time since its only Olympic appearance, at Seoul in 1988. China will host regional rival Iran here in a warmup on March 14. Iran beat bronze-medalist China twice enroute to taking gold in December's Asian Games.

### Connors defeats Vilas

NAPLES (AP) — Jimmy Connors began his quest for a third Nuveen Masters title with a 7-6, (9-7), 6-1 victory Monday over longtime rival Guillermo Vilas. Connors, who won the tournament in 1995 and 1997, faces Yannick Noah on Wednesday. The \$300,000 Nuveen Masters is the season-ending championship event on the senior tennis circuit. It features the top eight players on the tour. John McEnroe, who replaced Connors as the tour's top player for the first time this season, was forced to withdraw from the event.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH  
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10 Pass 7 What do you bid now?  
**Q.2 -** East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:  
47 QQ 782 QJ 10784 AK Q 8  
The bidding has proceeded:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
10 Pass 14 Pass What do you bid now?  
**Q.3 -** As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
AQ 73 CJ 102 QJ 5 AA Q 109  
The bidding has proceeded:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
10 Pass 14 Pass What do you bid now?  
**Q.4 -** Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AQ 73 CJ 102 QJ 5 AA Q 109  
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